



**International Society of City and Regional Planners - ISoCaRP**

**in cooperation with the**

**Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management  
The Netherlands**



## UTRECHT NEW CENTRAL STATION

YOUNG PLANNERS' WORKSHOP  
15-18 SEPTEMBER 2004

on the occasion of the  
40<sup>th</sup> International Planning Congress of ISoCaRP  
Geneva, Switzerland  
18-22 September 2004



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## Young Planners' Workshops

The Young Planners' Workshop was held for the first time on the occasion of the ISoCaRP congress in 1991 and has always been supported by UNESCO. The objective of this Workshop is to bring together young professional urban planners from all parts of the world. It provides them with the opportunity to work together as a closely-knit team on a specific subject, to establish a good hands-on working relationship and achieve results in a very short period of time. The young planners work on a real planning issue which is related to the theme of the Congress.

## Acknowledgement

Since 2003 ISoCaRP has been holding an additional Young Planners' Workshop. ISoCaRP is grateful to the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (V&W) that made it possible to hold this special workshop for the second time. The project of this workshop is chosen and designed by the Ministry itself and treats a concrete project in the Netherlands.

On the occasion of the ISoCaRP Congress in Cairo/Egypt in 2003 the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management sponsored a special Young Planners' Workshop on "*Landuse Intensification and Transportation in Almere*". The results were published in 2004.

ISoCaRP would like to thank in particular liaison officer *Drs Jutta Kulcke* of the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management.

Futhermore our thanks go to the other coordinators of the workshop:

*Drs Emmy Bolsius* (Dutch Ministry of Housing and Planning), and *Arch Urb Marie Fauconnet* (Université de Genève) and to the ISoCaRP coordinators: *Prof Fernando Brandão Alves* (University of Oporto, Fac. of Civil Engineering; ISoCaRP Vice President) and *Assoc. Prof Zeynep Meray Enlil* (Yildiz Technical University, Istanbul; Bureau Member of ISoCaRP in Turkey).

Last but not least ISoCaRP would like to thank the workshop participants

*Paul Chorus, Patricia Goldaracena, Pravina Govender, Cenk Hamamcioglu, Gulsum Rustemoglu, Aleksandra Stupar, Raquel Tardin and Ricardo Veludo* for their enthousiasm, their ideas and professionalism.

We are confident that the results of this workshop are a fruitful contribution to the project of the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management.

International Society of City and Regional Planners

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Preparatory Presentations (on CD Rom)	

**The Preparatory Presentations were submitted by the Participants beforehand to facilitate the Discussion in the Workshop and to enhance the results as published. They are available on the enclosed CD Rom:**

***Paul Chorus, Netherlands:***

Railway Stations and the human Perspective: A comparison between The Netherlands and Japan

***Patricia Goldaracena, Uruguay:***

Railway System in Uruguay

***Pravina Govender, South Africa:***

Original Railway Station – now transformed into a Business Area. Old Building renovated and used for the sale of Used Furniture

***Cenk Hamamcioglu, Turkey:***

Istanbul-Sirkeci Railway Station

***Gulsum Rustemoglu, Turkey:***

Santa Fe Trolley Station, San Diego, CA, USA

***Aleksandra Stupar, Serbia and Montenegro:***

The Belgrade Railway Station  
including an animated presentation (video)

***Raquel Tardin, Brasil/Spain:***

Railway Stations and human 'Perspective' – Sants Station, Barcelona

***Ricardo Veludo, Portugal:***

In a hurry to catch a train in an unknown Railway Station: Occasional passenger perspective of the Entrecampos interchange (Lisbon, Portugal)

## Preface and Summary

by the Coordinators

**Fernando Brandão Alves**, Vice President ISoCaRP

**Zeynep Merey Enlil**, Bureau Member ISoCaRP Turkey

This year the 40<sup>th</sup> World Congress continued the initiative we started last year and in addition to the traditional Young Planners' Workshop of ISoCaRP another parallel workshop, a *three-day Young Planners Workshop*, was held during 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September 2004. This parallel workshop was made possible thanks to the generous grant from the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (V&W) and to the efforts of our Executive Director, *Judy van Hemert*.

The *Three-day Young Planners Workshop* served as a technical forum for eight Young Planners from various countries around the world, including Brazil/Spain, Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia and Montenegro, South Africa, Turkey, Uruguay, USA/Turkey. The event was held at the Campus Bataille, University of Geneva.

### Theme of the Workshop and the Study Area

In a first stage the representative officials, Ms *Jutta Kulcke* from the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (V&W), and, on invitation by V&W, Ms *Emmy Bolsius* from the Dutch Ministry of Housing & Planning, provided a brief description of the theme, "*Railway Stations and the Human 'Perspective'*" and introduced the Programme concerning the proposed task by the Dutch Ministry, which included the description of the study area, Utrecht Central Railway Station and its surroundings, within the context of the City of Utrecht.

The **Main Tasks** were to answer the following questions:

- *"What does a station mean for the city?"*
- *"What does a good station design mean, especially seen 'through the eyes of the daily customer'?"*
- *How do these apply to the Utrecht Central Railway Station? And how can it be improved taking into account these criteria?*

As part of this task, the Young Planners were given beforehand the assignment to observe and analyze a railway station in their home country. This assignment was directed by questions related to the experience of space from human perspective as well as the spatial qualities of the location in the railway station they were to study. They were expected to bring this experience into the workshop, share their observations in different contexts and to **critically** discuss the spatial qualities of railway stations from a variety of perspectives with an emphasis on the users' perception. Our young planners brought case studies of railway stations from around the world; these included Amsterdam, Belgrade, Barcelona, Lisbon, Istanbul, Montevideo, Santa Fe and Umhali, South Africa.

Concerning the specific task of delineating the "vision" and the "spatial principles" according to which the Utrecht Central Railway Station should be re-arranged the Dutch Ministry of Transportation recommended our young planners to analyze and understand patterns of passenger flows, including the bus passengers, the people just passing by, the visitors and etc. as well as the relationship between the facilities like the existing shopping center to the Utrecht Railway

Station and to the rest of the city. Crucial to this analysis was the potential role of the railway station in “bridging” the Old City, (predominated by residential, cultural, religious and commercial uses) and the Trade Market (predominated by offices), which were currently set apart.

## Background

Utrecht is the fourth largest city of the Netherlands, with a population of more than a quarter of a million. Utrecht’s central location in the Netherlands makes it an attractive city to live in and a favourite enterprise location. The European high speed train network also integrates Utrecht to Frankfurt, one of the most important cities of finance and banking in Europe, and it is expected to be connected to Barcelona and Turin via Lille.

Considering this scenario the Utrecht Station, located in the center of the city and surrounded by various types of land uses, has an important role to develop within Europe as a hub of interconnections. As mentioned above, the railway track, at the moment, acts as a barrier and divides the city into two separate sections with specific land uses:

- a) On the east side of the railway - residential developments, cultural and religious facilities, and commercial uses;
- b) On the west side of the railway - predominantly office buildings.

## The Project Methodology: Looking for Creative Solutions

At the beginning of the Workshop the Ministry of Transport introduced the problematic itself. Considering an integrating view, this special case should give not only an insight into specific Dutch transportation phenomena but also an insight into the general urban problems around Utrecht Central Station, on a local scale.

Participants were asked to find creative solutions for the development of the new Utrecht Central Station and its surroundings. Eventually, the emphasis had to be put on solutions that demand the participation of all stakeholders and experts under the vision of a *spacious city centre* that the city of Utrecht’s staff members had been developing. In this context, three key elements of this vision were considered<sup>1</sup>:

- New Public Transport Terminal – a transport hub where trains, buses, taxis, trams, bikers, pedestrians and cars converge and transfer.
- Public space and accommodations - this includes traffic routes, pedestrian walks, parks and squares.
- Re/development of properties – local properties within the station area, like shopping mall Hoog Catharijne, offices and houses, will be (re)developed by their respective owners under supervision of the city of Utrecht.

Analyzing some results of the working groups we concluded that users were not properly considered in the complex matrix of interests of the stakeholders. Therefore, having in mind that a station should be a facility designated to serve people, some project teams felt the necessity to develop a methodology based on a profile matrix combining special needs of users (several reduced mobility factors) with the users’ motivation of going to the station.

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<sup>1</sup> According to *Octopus Group Report* – “Utrecht Central Station. Octopus user friendly. Developing the concept, links and user needs satisfaction”.

Some important programmatic principles and objectives were defined by the working teams for future projects in the area - in fact, some are really quite impressive and represent the high level of results reached by the workshop groups, such as<sup>2</sup>:

- Strengthen user oriented design: design and organization should be focused on all types of user needs (information, resting areas, spatial perception, barriers to mobility, etc...);
- Improve local interchange;
- Promote spatial and functional integration of urban features and separate parts of the city.

To complement the proposed design, the project teams developed the following goal:

Regarding the strategies of the working groups together with the City of Utrecht's Master Plan outline, we may conclude that the more efficient goal to be defined by designers and planners for Utrecht Central Station and its surroundings, should be the one that could combine a mixed-use development with high-quality public transportation – changing the old role of the station, and creating a spatial structure where people could enjoy not only the improved transportation facilities but also commercial, social and cultural events which will bring a new urban life into the area. In other words, the Central Station should be more than a hub of transportation and a major mode mixer, but a hub of urban life as well “bridging” the divided parts of the city rather than being a barrier as it is now.

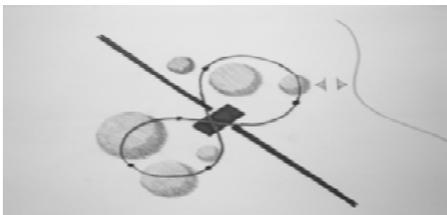
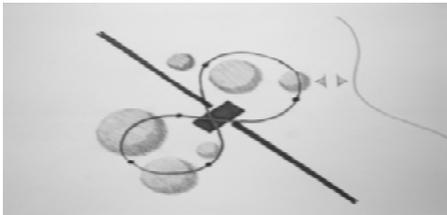
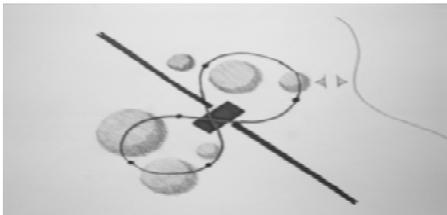
We hope the creative energies of our Young Planners poured into this report will be a source of inspiration in the re-organization of this crucial hub of Utrecht.

We would like to thank *Jutta Kulcke* (coordinator V&W), *Emmy Bolsius* (coordinator VROM), *Marie Fauconnet* (*Université de Genève*), *Judy van Hemert* and of course all of our young colleagues, *Paul Chorus*, *Patricia Goldaracena de las Carreras*, *Pravina Govender*, *Cenk Hamamcioglu*, *Gulsum Rustemoglu*, *Alexandra Stupar*, *Raquel Tardin* and *Ricardo Veludo* who put their hearts and minds into the workshop.

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<sup>2</sup> Idem footnote nr.1.





# Utrecht Central Station = Octopus user friendly

Developing the concept, links and  
user needs satisfaction

## Group Members:

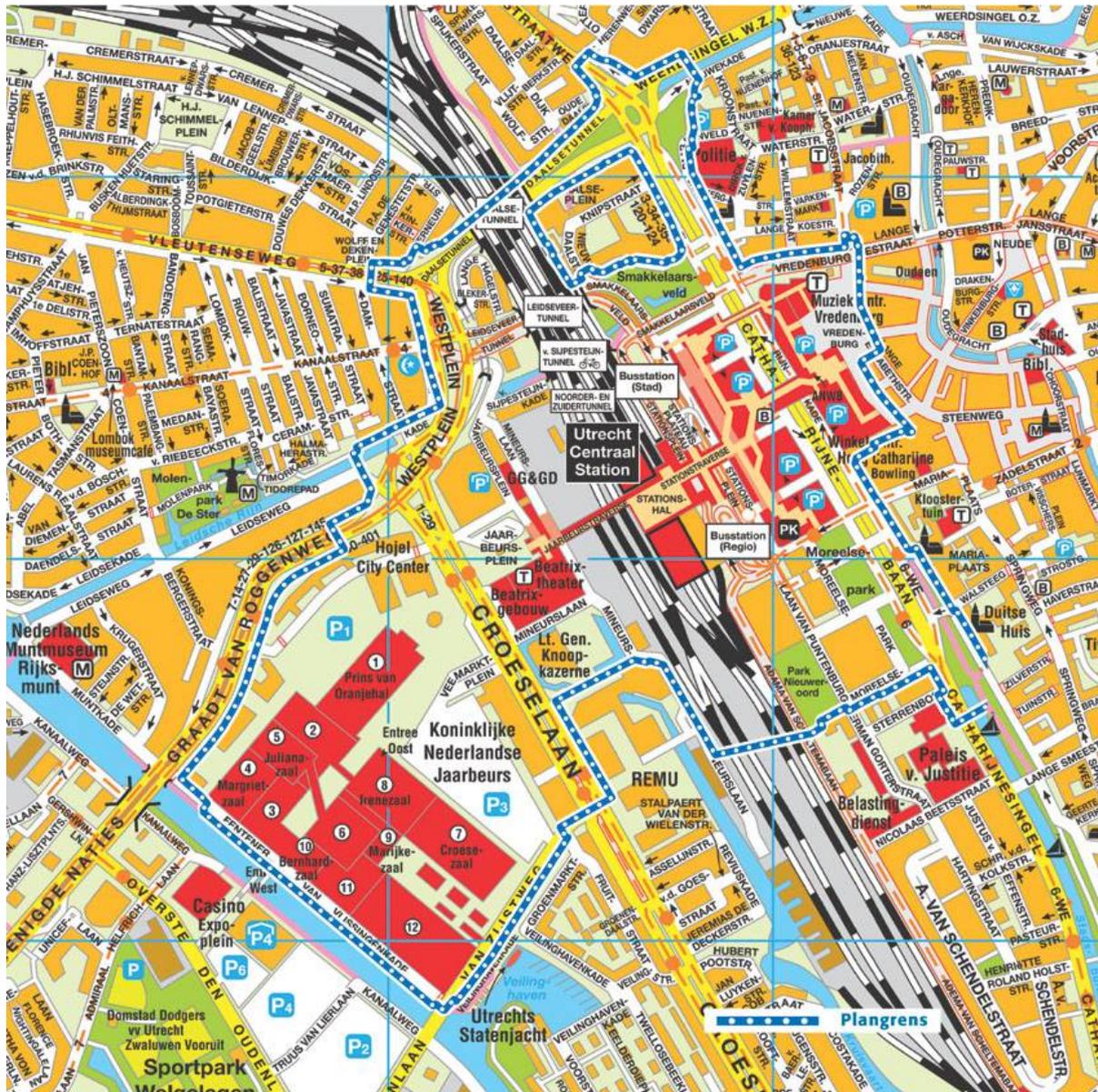
Cenk Hamamcioglu, Turkey  
Gulsum Rustemoglu, Turkey / USA  
Raquel Tardin, Brasil / Spain  
Ricardo Veludo, Portugal



## 1.2 The central station in the city

Utrecht Station, located at the centre of the city, is surrounded by various types of land uses. The railway track divides the city into two separate sections which have specific land uses. On the east side of the railway, there are mainly residential developments, cultural and religious facilities, and commercial uses. The west side of the railway track has predominantly office buildings and trade market. Figure 2 shows the overall land uses of the centre city citation.

**Figure 3** Utrecht central station and the urban fabric, roads, railways and canals. (Masterplan area of intervention is marked in blue with white dots)



### 1.3 The stakeholders

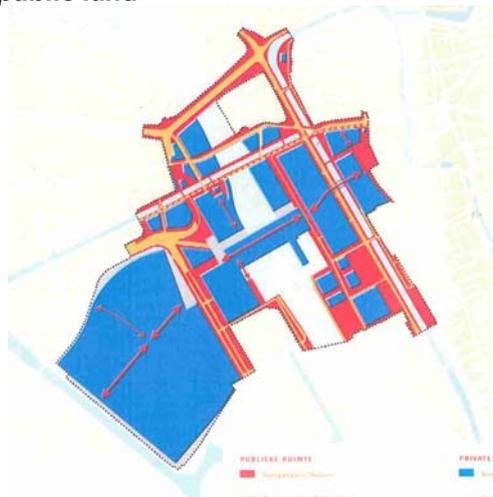
Currently a Masterplan for urban development is in preparation. Various stakeholders are involved in the development process of the Masterplan. Key stakeholders are listed below:

- The City of Utrecht
- NS Vastgoed (Commercial Property Division of the Dutch Railroad Company);
- Jaarbeurs (Trade Fair Company)
- Corio (Proprietor of Shopping Mall Hoog Catharijne)
- Retailers within the area
- Inhabitants of Utrecht
- Commuters (Utrecht Central Station is the major hub of the Dutch Railroad Company)
- Interest groups
- The national ministries of Transport and Spatial Planning.

### 1.4 The real property structure

The majority of Utrecht's land uses are owned by private property owners. Canals, bus routes, and other infrastructure systems are the only publicly owned land uses. Figure 4 shows the real property structure of Utrecht.

**Figure 4** *Real property structure of the station masterplan. Blue indicates private land and red indicates public land*



### 1.5 The Masterplan

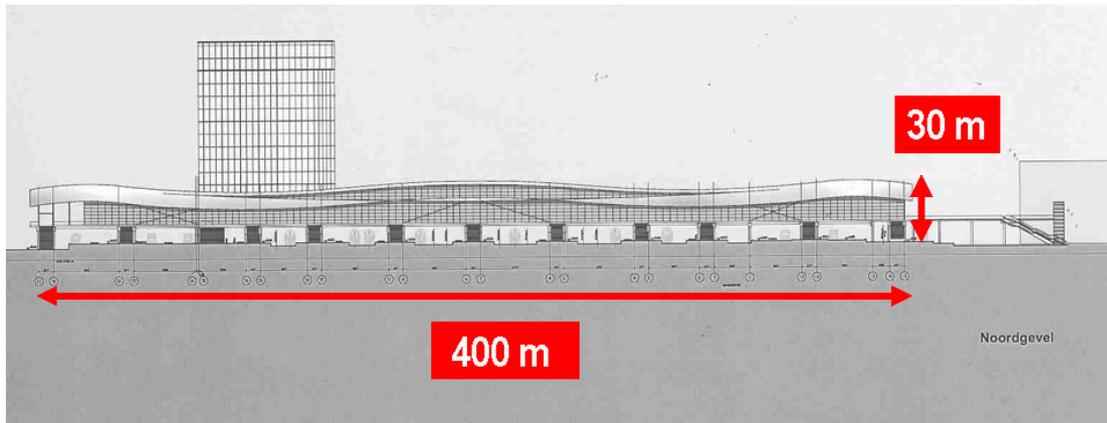
The Masterplan can be looked upon as the actual urban development program for the central station area according to vision A, containing all necessary information for the actual reconstruction of the station area. Additional parts of the Masterplan are a Zoning Scheme, an Accessibility Plan, a Safety Effects Report, an Environmental Effects Report and a Social Safety Plan. All plans and reports must be approved by the city council. Thereupon, architects and urban development professionals will start designing the new central station area. Yet again, a great emphasis is placed on the involvement of all stakeholders in the realization process of the Masterplan.

The Masterplan was published in June 2003.

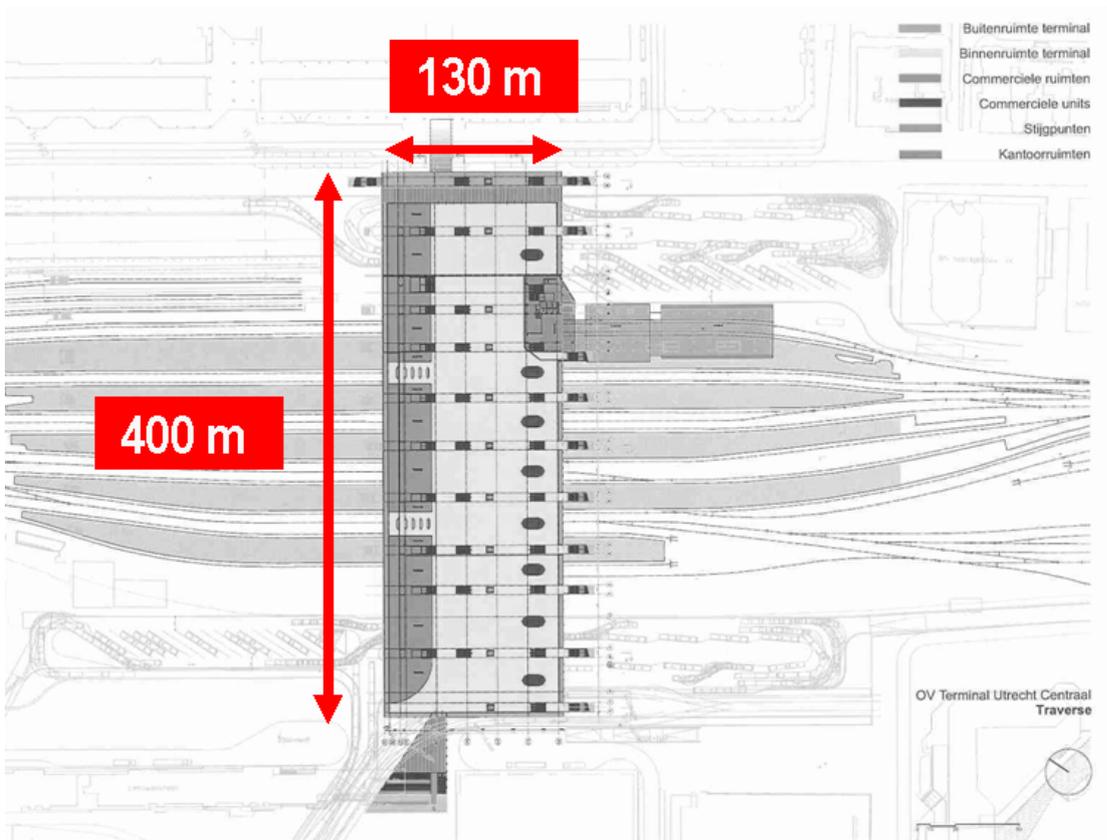
### 1.5.1 The station metrics

The station physical dimensions should bring special awareness for user needs, especially in what concerns people with reduced mobility conditions.

**Figure 5** Section dimensions of the station



**Figure 6** Plant dimensions of the station



## 2. Objectives

### 2.1 The Vision of the City of Utrecht

Under the supervision of various meetings and workshops held with stakeholders and experts, the staff members of the city of Utrecht developed the vision of **a spacious city centre**.

Three key elements of this vision are:

1. New Public Transport Terminal – a transport hub where trains, buses, taxis, trams, bikers, pedestrians and cars converge and transfer.
2. Public space and accommodations - this includes traffic routes, pedestrian walks, parks and squares.
3. Re/development of properties – local properties within the station area, like shopping mall Hoog Catharijne, offices and houses, will be (re)developed by their respective owners under supervision of the city of Utrecht.

### 2.2 The proposed task by the Dutch Ministry of Transportation

The Dutch Ministry of Transportation assigned the team members to deal with problematic issues in the proposed railway station by answering the questions of “What does the station mean for the city?” and “What does a good station design mean?” From that standpoint, the team reviewed the City of Utrecht’s vision to formulate some objectives.

The role of the shopping centre, bus passengers, passages through the station (from trade market to city and vice-versa), visitors of cultural events were subordinating issues that the Dutch Ministry of Transportation made the recommendation to analyze.

### 2.3 Objectives of the project team

Project team objectives:

- Strengthen user oriented design: design and organization should be focused on all types of users needs (information, resting areas, spatial perception, barriers to mobility, etc.);
- Improve local interchange;
- Promote spatial and functional integration of urban features.

To compliment the proposed design, at the end of the overall analysis of the vision and the key elements underlined in the City of Utrecht’s Master Plan outline, the project team developed the following goal:

**To draft the proposed Utrecht Railway station to provide a mixed-use development creating a 'gateway' to Utrecht through vibrant shops, offices and restaurants, but also green gardens, public spaces and cultural facilities as well as providing a high-quality public transport interchange by using a monorail system.**

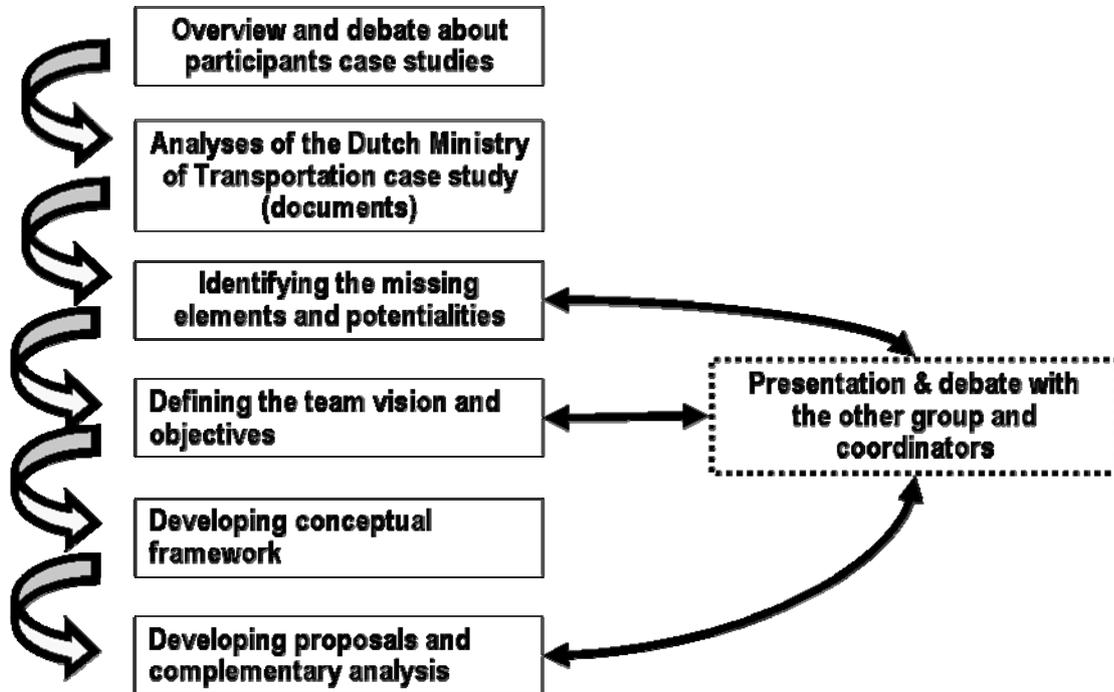
## 3. Methodology

At the early stages of the project, the team members were given an overview of various case studies from the participant’s countries such as South Africa, Netherlands, Serbia, Turkey, United States, Portugal, Spain and Uruguay. The analysis of these countries sample railway stations assisted the project team to have a broader perspective and understand the importance of user needs.

The project team developed a conceptual map of the subject station by analyzing the existing conditions. Afterwards, the primary needs and complimentary needs were discussed based on the user’s matrix. The team also focused on the missing elements from the proposed design

and new opportunities generated by this redevelopment. It was concluded that one of the most critical solution had to be made with respect to the inefficiency of local linkage design. The flowchart describes the process of the overall methodology (Figure 7).

**Figure 7 Methodology**



## 4. Concepts and Design Proposals

### 4.1 The user needs approach

The recommended readings for this workshop<sup>3</sup> reveals that in many cases interchanges lack the importance of basic and typical user needs.

The material provided concerning the project for the new Central Station of Utrecht puts in evidence that the users were not properly considered in the complex matrix of interests of the stakeholders. Therefore, it was highly emphasized in this regards, and considered of crucial importance. The station is a facility designated to serve people: travelers and non travelers (citizens in general), with different personal and social profiles.

To address a proper methodology and response to this issue, a profile matrix of user needs was developed and some examples of basic needs are provided to illustrate the mentioned needs.

#### 4.1.1 Typical user needs profile matrixes

The definition of the user needs profiles can be done in several complementary ways: public inquiries, direct observation (video, ...), simulation, etc.

In this context, the project team attempted to list all possible users' profiles, considering two main criteria:

<sup>3</sup> Report for the European Commission (1999), "MIMIC project – Mobility, Intermodality and Interchanges"; Report for the European Commission DG VII (2000) "GUIDE – Urban interchanges – A good practice guide"; Report for the European Commission (2001) "PIRATE – final report".

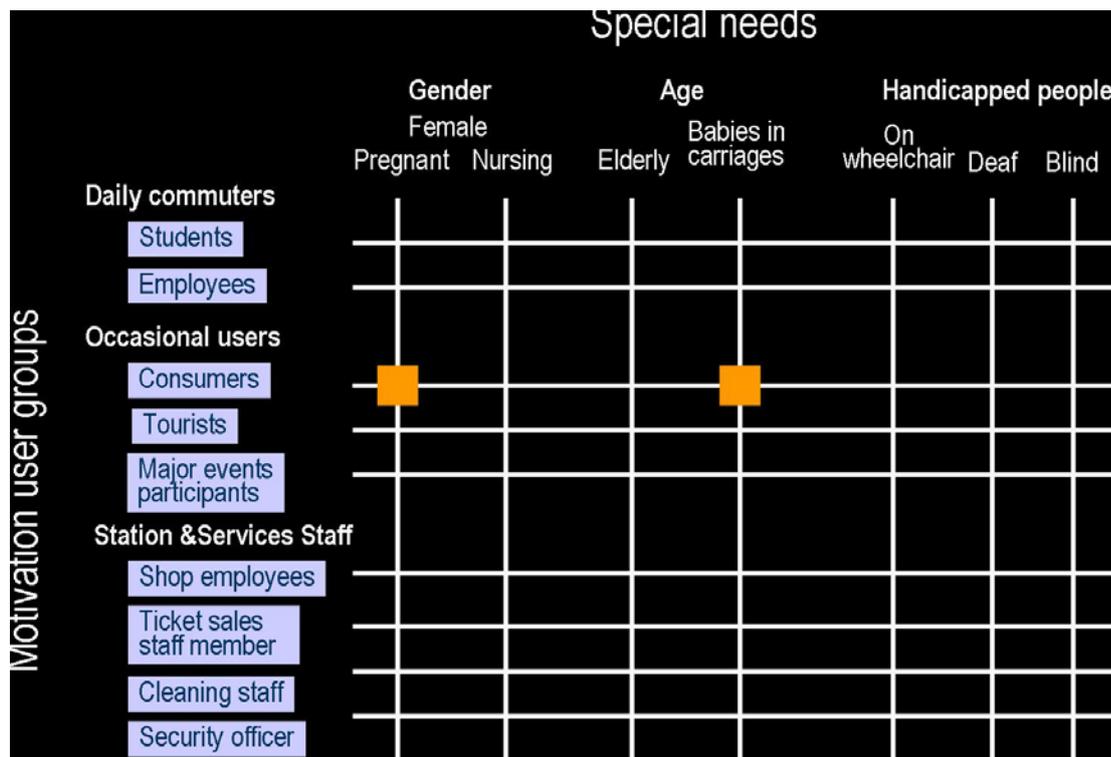
- Users' motivation of going to the station (occasional travelers, daily commuters, station facilities/service workers);
- Special needs (several reduced mobility factors).

For each category of users' motivation (combinations of criteria), the project team simulated the true thoughts and feelings of the users when they get into a station and using its services in different situations.

The result of this exercise is shown in the following figures (matrix) and illustrative questions for a certain type or user.

Example: Occasional user / consumer / female / pregnant / with a baby in carriage

**Figure 8** Occasional user / consumer / female / pregnant / with a baby in carriage profile



For this profile some questions and thoughts are likely to occur, namely:

- Can I park at a convenient parking lot?
- Where is the nearest restroom?
- How much do I have to walk for... buying the ticket, a chocolate, a pregnancy magazine and getting to the right platform?
- Do I have a comfortable bench to seat on the platform?
- In case of delivery, how long would it take for medical assistance to arrive at my location?
- I wonder if there are roomy seats, namely for a pregnant women?
- If the time between 2 train connections is more than 30 minutes, can I find a place in the station to take a nap?

Example: Daily commuter / employee / blind (entering the new station for the first time)

**Figure 9** *Daily commuter / employee / blind (entering the new station for the first time) profile*



For this use profile some questions and thoughts are likely to occur, namely:

- Where is everything (entrance, tickets, platform access, links to metro or bus, food, toilet, etc.)?
- Is there any texture on the pavement marking routes, directions, location of plans and signals in Braille?
- Maybe there are some acoustic signals announcing dangerous areas, characteristic smells, or noises?

#### 4.1.2 New user profile: UFF!

Currently, the station is being considered for transportation use only. After the last service of transportation there is no life in this area, therefore dangerous for pedestrians.

Safety and urban life is an important issue after certain hours in this part of the city. For example, this station would be nearly empty after the last service time at midnight; this could create some serious concerns for pedestrians passing by the station.

However, this station can, or should, work as “urban hub” in a broader sense: connecting places, functions and people, which are not necessarily related to travelers or transportation. In this line of thought, the station could provide spaces for cultural events, recreation, leisure, sightseeing, etc. during the day and night. The integration of a cinema complex and/or a musical hall could encourage a new cultural dynamics in the area.

As a consequence of these new alternative functions, the new local links (“stitching effect” of the urban fabric) new user profiles will naturally appear. We called this type of users: UFF (user for fun), meaning people that use the station for recreation, sightseeing, etc.

This type of user will require:

- Transportation services at convenient hours and frequency (coordinated with the timetable of cultural events, cinema sessions, etc.);
- Parking area;
- Restaurants and bars (including the ones located in the historical centre);

- Cinema, theatre, dancing and music events in the station complex and its surroundings (existing theaters and other cultural facilities in the area);
- Security;
- ...

## 4.2 The interchange besides the transportation function: The Octopus

The metaphoric image chosen to illustrate the planning concept is the “Octopus”.

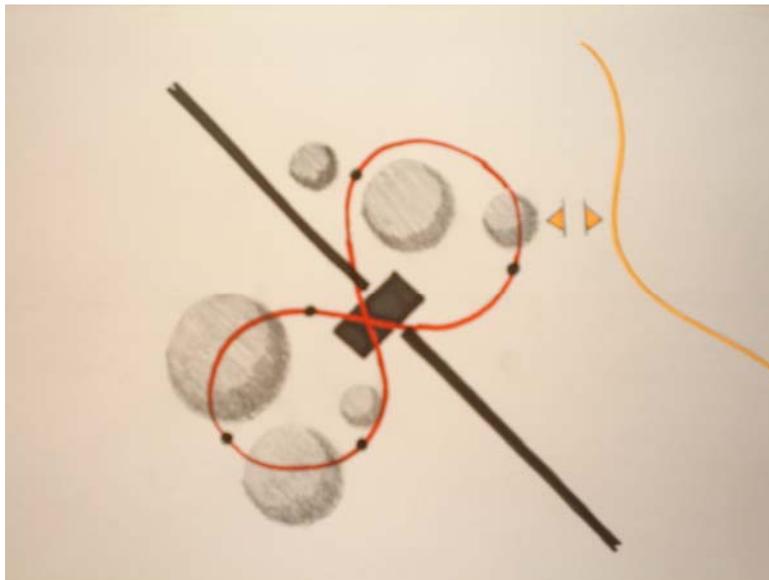
The idea is to use the station complex to generate an integration dynamics on its area of influence in the urban fabric: linking local cultural facilities, historical centre, local commerce, etc. In addition, the barrier effect of the railways on local accessibility can be mitigated in a more attractive way, generating new opportunities of mobility and city perception.

The head of the octopus is the central station and its tentacles can be a **monorail track**, complement with vertical access strategically located.

The vision for the station complex is to use a new monorail, passing over the station and some buildings, creating new links relevant for local mobility. This monorail should also be designed as an attractive means of transportation that can offer the possibility of having a special view of the city and the station complex (city and space perception).

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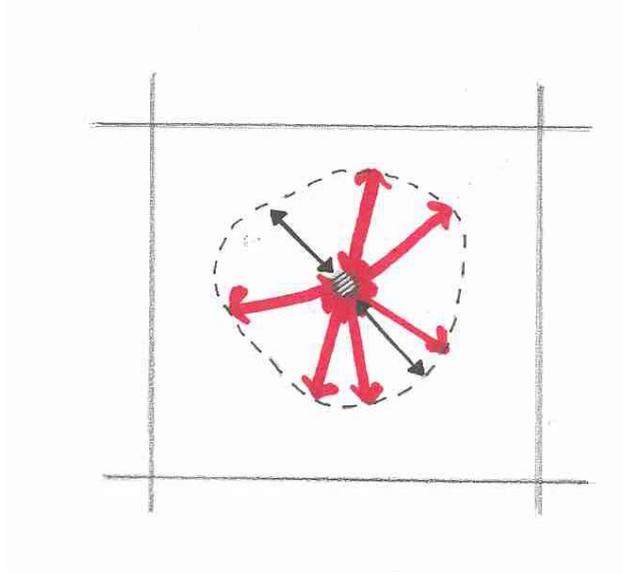
**Figure 10** *Gen, not eral concept: the octopus (new local links for citizens)*



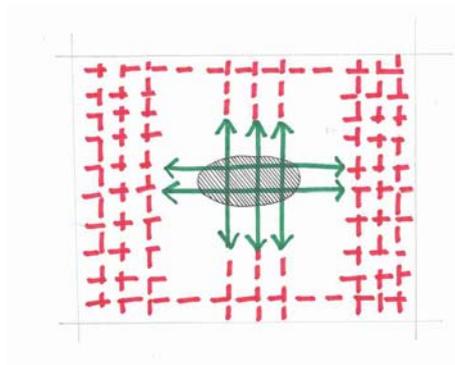
### 4.2.1 Heart: the pulsar effect and permeability

The station is a generator of a certain pulsar effect, pumping people, information and goods in the city (Figure 11). The impulses of the station have to use the fabric permeability to be propagated over the city. In the permeability diagram of the area (Figure 12) the tension along the railways is quite evident.

**Figure 11**      *The pulsar effect*



**Figure 12**      **Permeability and tension**



#### **4.2.2 Monorail, kissing bus, horizontal links, vertical access units: the local links**

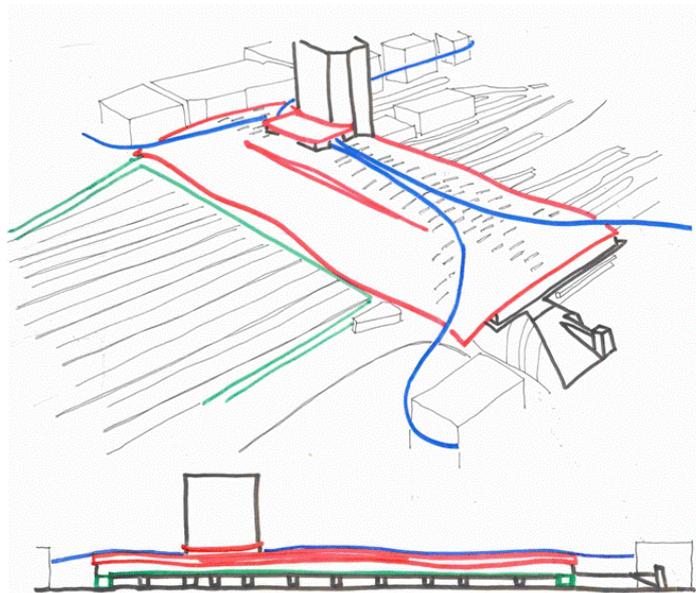
Developing the idea of the “tentacles”, several possibilities were discussed:

- The monorail, providing an alternative offer for local movements, with low capacity of transport (see Figure 12 and Figure 13)
- The vertical accesses between the monorail and the ground level at each stop
- The “kissing bus”, taking buses more closely to the train passengers location (in the main hall) through an elevated platform to be added to the main building
- The moving walkway, which should be provided to link each extreme side of the station (about 400m long), is very convenient to transport passengers from trains to trams and buses, sometimes at 500m distance
- Further research on alternative zoning for transportation can provide a more user friendly environment.

**Figure 12** *Local transportation network and the octopus tentacles: Monorail, kissing bus, horizontal links, vertical access units*



**Figure 13** *Perspective of possible monorail tracks and new elevated platform: new local links*



**Figure 14** *Vertical accesses to the monorail: possibilities...*

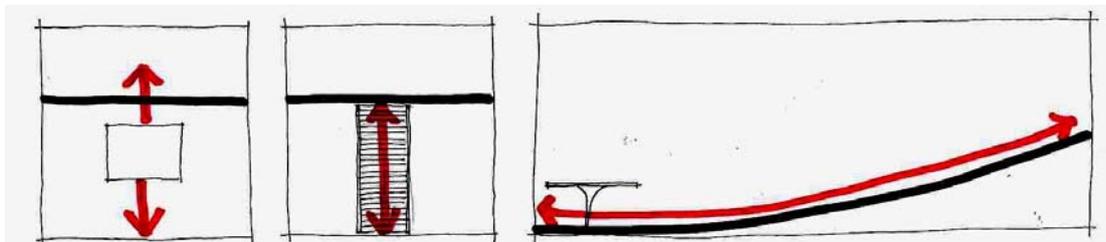
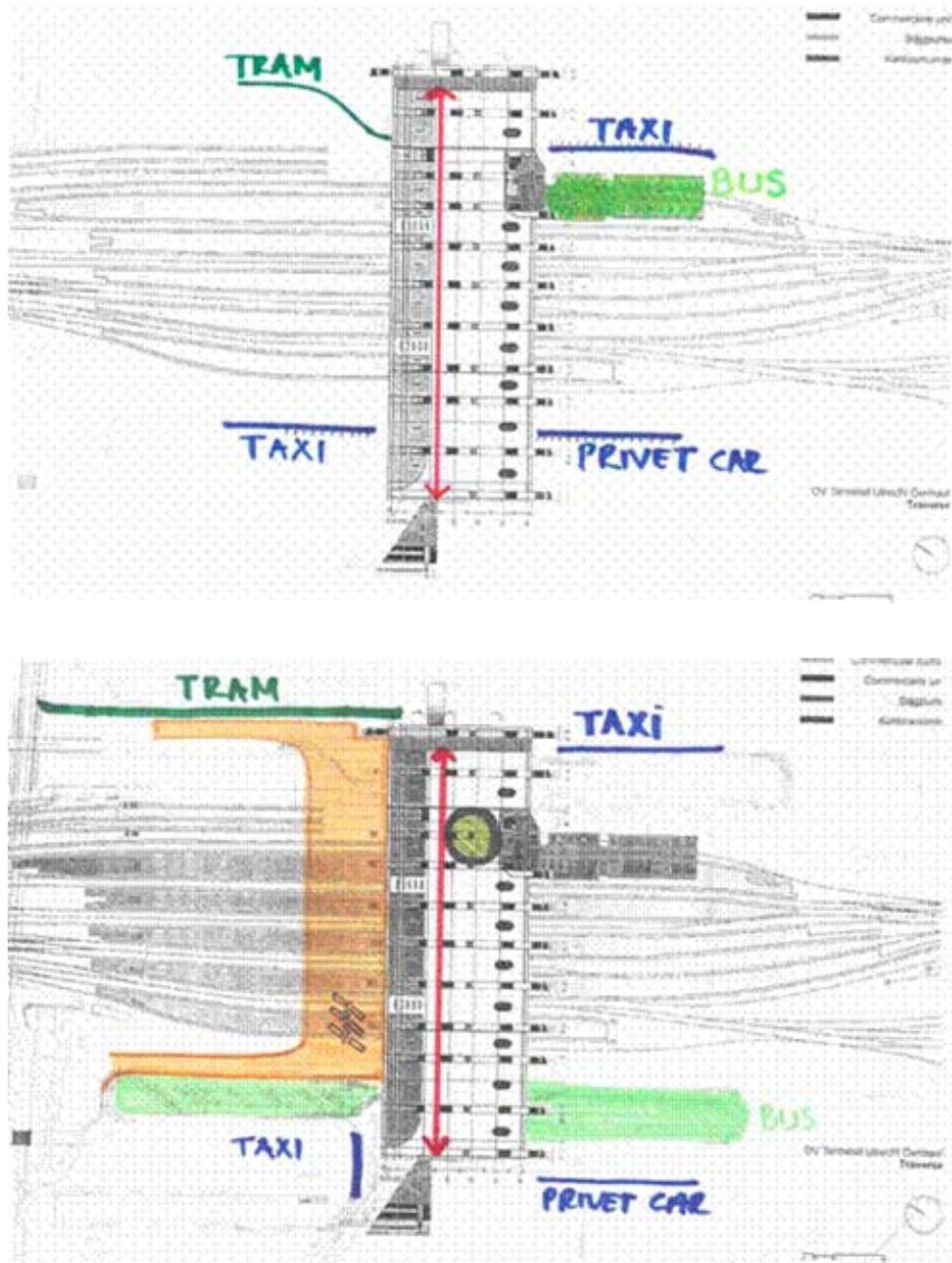


Figure 15 Alternative transportation zoning and improvement of local links



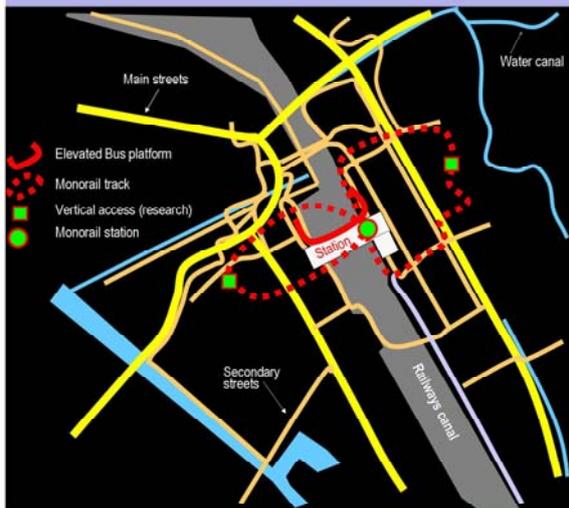
# RAILWAY STATION OF UTRECHT: the octopus user friendly

## *Developing The Concept Links & Users Needs Satisfaction*

ISoCaRP 40th World Planning Congress,  
V&W Dutch Ministry Workshop, September 2004

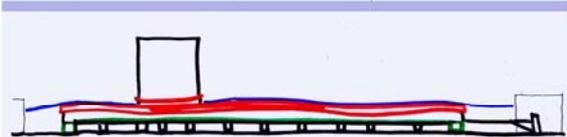
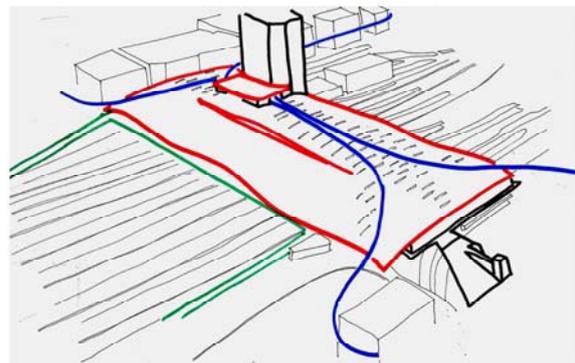
Cenk HAMAMCIOGLU, Gulsum RUSTEMOGLU, Raquel TARDIN-, Ricardo VELUDO

Monorail, kissing bus, horizontal links, vertical access units:  
the local links



Developing the idea of the "tentacles", several possibilities were discussed:

- 1-The monorail (providing alternative offer for local movements, with low capacity of transport);
- 2-The moving walkway, which should be provided to link each extreme side of station (about 400m long), very convenient to transport passengers from trains to trams and buses, sometimes at 500m distance;
- 3-The "kissing bus", taking buses more close to the train passengers location (in the main hall) through an elevated platform to be added to the main building;
- 4-The vertical accesses between the monorail and the ground level at each stop.



1

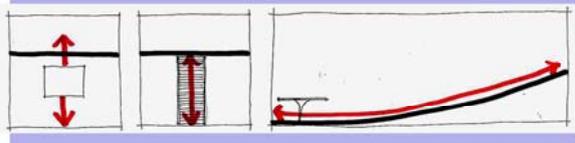
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# Utrecht Central Station

## Revitalization Plan



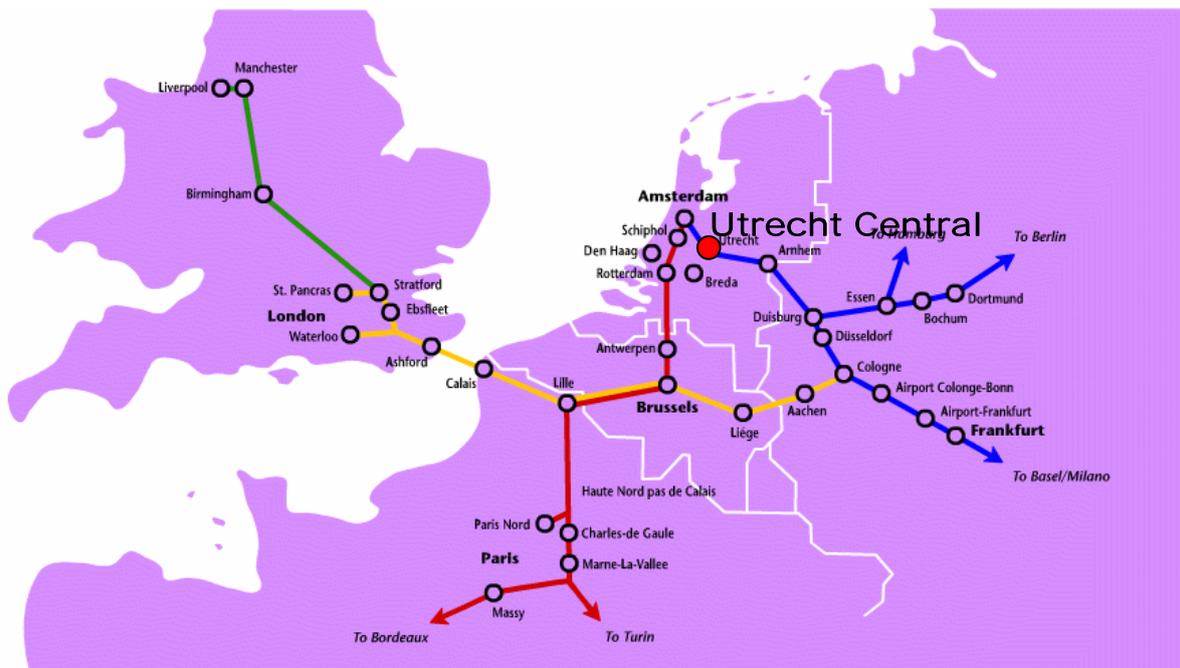
### **Group Members:**

Paul Chorus, the Netherlands  
Patricia Goldaracena, Uruguay  
Pravina Govender, South Africa  
Aleksandra Stupar, Serbia & Montenegro

# 1. Introduction

Utrecht Central Station is located in the middle of the Netherlands and because of this central location it functions as the main hub in the Netherlands. Everyday many passengers transfer on this station. This takes place on multiple levels of scale. Utrecht Central Station is a (trans) national node providing international linkages to Germany (Frankfurt) and to all the main cities throughout the whole of the Netherlands. It serves as a regional node by integrating the diverse modes of transport in the region (bus and light rail) with each other. Last but not least, the local busses enable you to go to practically any part of the city from the station. It is expected that this multilevel transit function will gain more importance in the future when the Utrecht Central Station is linked to the High Speed Train network (HST-network) and the amount of offices in the surrounding area is increased.

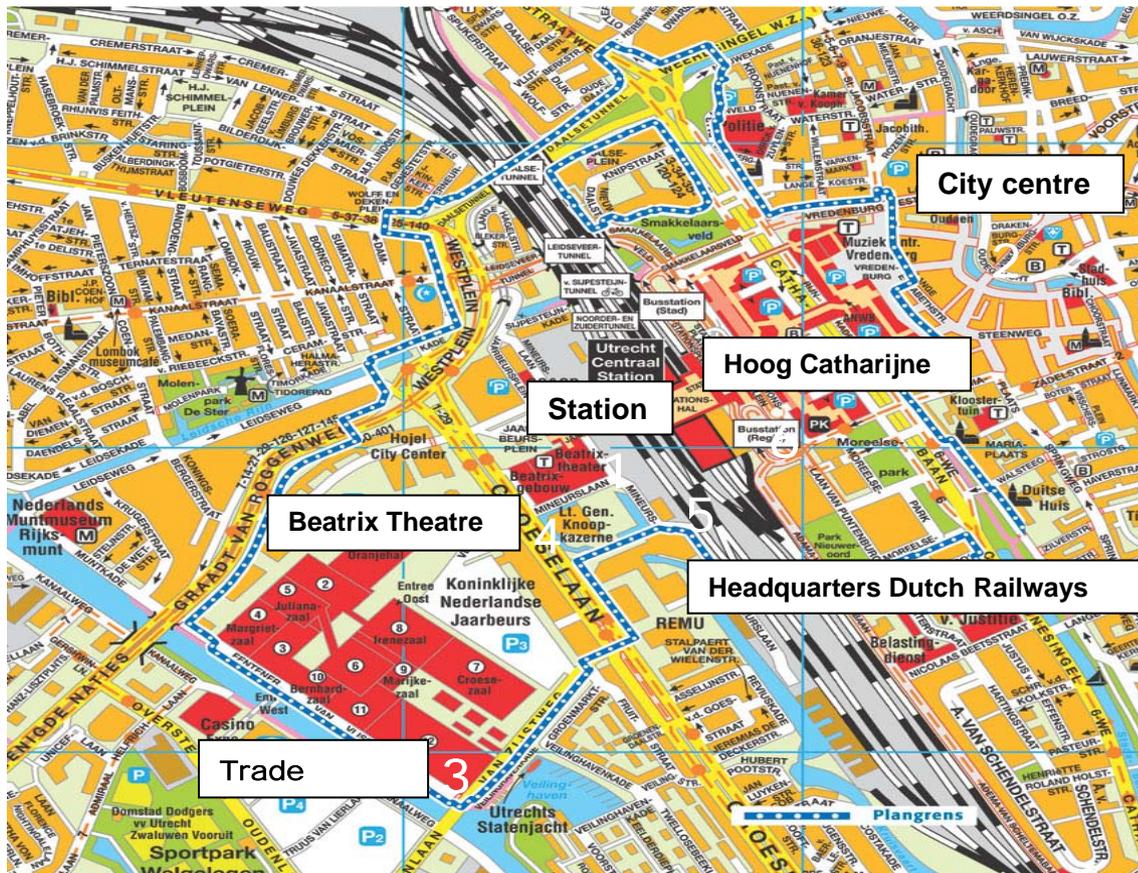
Figure 1 Utrecht Central Station in the HST-Network



# 2. Situational Analysis

Due to its central location Utrecht Central Station has attracted many large companies to locate in the vicinity of the station. Among them are the headquarters of the ‘Rabobank’, a large bank in the Netherlands, and the headquarters of the Dutch Railways. The Trade Market is situated on the west side, in which many national as well as international fairs/congresses are being organized. Next to the Trade Market one can find the Beatrix Theatre. A theatre that has gained national reputation due to its various musicals. On the east side of the central station the old city centre with its canals and old houses can be found. In between the old city centre and the ‘modern city’ (the west side with the Trade Market and the theatre) the shopping centre ‘Hoog Catharijne’ is situated. This shopping centre is integrated into the building of Utrecht Central Station.

Figure 2 Utrecht Central Station and its surroundings



In the present situation the station offers some opportunities as well as some problems. The opportunities are listed under 'what works'. The problems are listed under 'what doesn't work'.

## 2.1 What works

### A) City versus Station

On multiple levels of scale the Central Station of Utrecht functions as a node thus making the city itself very accessible for multiple types of passengers (business people, shopping people, students etc.). This high accessibility has given rise to several economic activities that normally would not have been there if this station was not located so centrally. For its city-marketing the municipality of Utrecht can 'abuse' this centrality to attract more economic activities to their city. One big advantage is that Utrecht already has a head start in recognizability. Practically everybody, at least in the Netherlands, knows about the city and especially about its station!

### B) Bus passengers

The station provides an integrative environment for the other modes of transport that are concentrated around the station. The national level links up with the regional and local level by providing transfer connections for light rail and busses that serve the region of Utrecht as well as the urban neighbourhoods within the city.

### C) Station as a shopping centre

The shopping centre 'Hoog Catharijne' offers a wide range of shops and services inside the station. It 'seduces' many transfer passengers to buy something before boarding the trains. The area of influence of this shopping centre extends well beyond the local level. It has a regional

function and partially complements to the old city centre of Utrecht which borders 'Hoog Catharijne' on the east side, see figure 2.

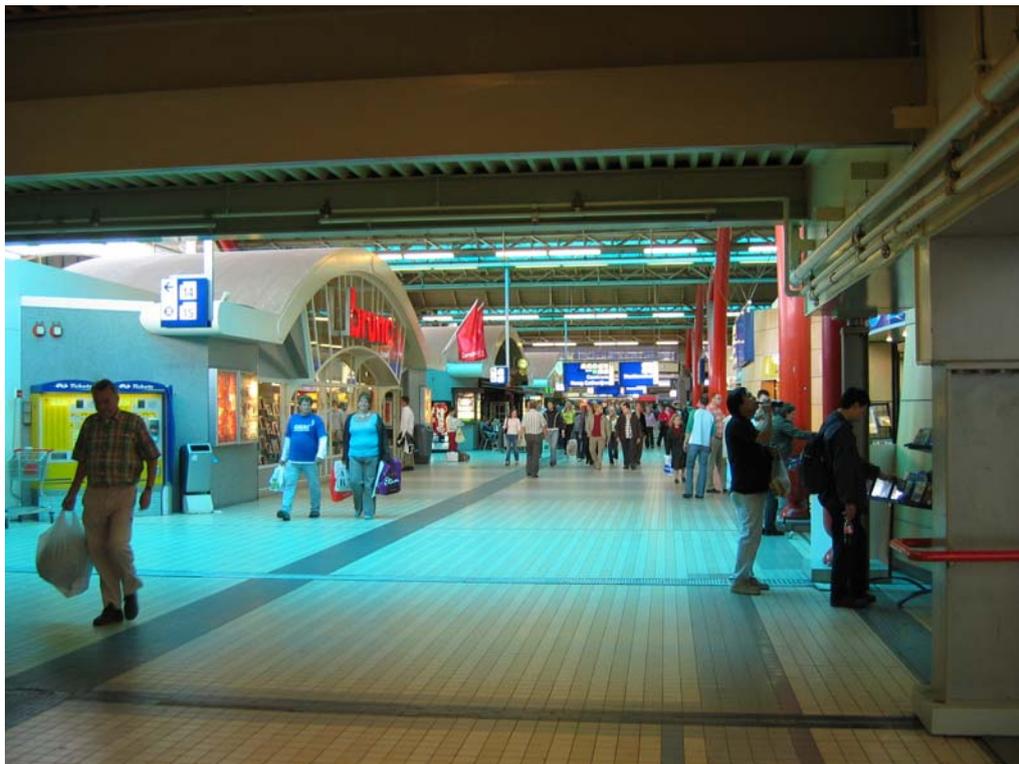
#### **D) Passages through the station**

The passages through the station are oversized and spacious therefore they are well equipped to be used by a broader group of users than only the traveler. This in turn makes it attractive for other non-railway orientated services to be located inside the station.

Also large cultural facilities as the Beatrix Theatre and the Trade Market benefit from this. The spacious passages can relatively easy deal with the sudden peaks in passengers flows caused by these activities.

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**Figure 3**      *One of the passages inside the Central Station*



## **2.2 What doesn't work**

### **A) City versus Station**

When looking at figure 1 one can see that the Central Station of Utrecht acts as a barrier instead of a connector between the surrounding areas. The old city centre is shut off from the Trade Market side (west side of the station) by the railway station. This is not a desirable situation, while it is likely that there is a clear functional relationship between for example the Trade Market and the old city centre (e.g. having dinner after a congress in the city centre). A person who wants to go from the west side to the east side of the station is forced to cross the shopping centre and has to join the large passenger flows, which could be rather unpleasant.

### **B) Bus Passengers**

The station provides a quite confusing environment for bus passengers. Signalizations and entrances to the bus platforms are unclear. The walking routes to the bus stops are chaotic because of the multiple passages and the intermingling with leisure people who use the

passage at a different (read slower) speed. Furthermore the bus stops are unattractively hidden away underneath the passages on the ground level. It is a rather unpleasant environment, especially at night.

Figure 4 The bus station on the ground level of the Central Station



### C) Station as a shopping centre

As mentioned before the shopping centre partially complements the city centre, but also directly competes with the old city centre. A large part of the shopping centre 'Hoog Catharijne' offers the same services/facilities that one can find in the city centre. Adding new functions to the station in the future means therefore taking into account the functional profile of the old city centre.

The shopping centre consists of a lot of 'dead ends'; passages that lead to nowhere. Furthermore there are too many passages which make it more difficult to orientate oneself inside the station. During the night most facilities are closed and the spacious passages then become a favourite spot for homeless people and junkies. This gives the station a rather unpleasant atmosphere at night.

### D) Passages through the station

The oversized and spacious passages are an advantage during the day, but a disadvantage during the night. When almost all the shops are closed and there is hardly anyone in the station one feels rather unsafe. The outdated design and the many 'dead ends', but also the rather unclear entrances on particularly the old city centre side (east side) contribute to this feeling. More activities during the night would therefore be most welcome!

### 3. Objectives

The objectives for the redesign of Utrecht Central Station can be summed up as follows:

- Improve the passenger circulation
- Create distinct layers
- Vertical/horizontal communication
- Integration of the station with the city structure
- Introduction of a natural system in the station
- Meet the needs of the various users
- Give the users a choice.

### 4. Basic Concept 'The Station as a Meeting Place'

The design revolves around the theme 'the station as a meeting place'. By this is meant that the station itself should give room to active and passive activities. The bustling vibrant station should also house an area that interrupts this process. A kind of non-activity place where one can get a rest. The ideal place for this would in our opinion be the central station hall. Therefore this area should not get too many shops, as is the case in the present situation. It shouldn't be an extension of the shopping centre, but rather a place where one can relax by looking at some art, or sit in a nice lounge enjoying the view of greenery and water (the natural system) inside the station. Hereby the following aspects have to be taken into account:

**COMFORT:** Provide pleasant waiting, rest and meeting areas. A clear and clean, airy, green and well-protected environment. It will be well lit at night. The range of facilities and services that have defined themes will help users to feel comfortable in an environment that is user-friendly.

**ACCESS:** Provide adequate access points for vertical movement and horizontal movement by improving the entrance areas and access to the train and bus platform at appropriate points. There will be less vertical elements to improve orientation, but these will be wider than in the current situation. Aside from the central ticket office there will be ticket machines provided at the access point and on the ground/platform level.

**FLOWS:** Separation of Fast and Slow traffic by creating dual pathways. One is uninterrupted and open. The other has a number of enclaves that give the user a choice in terms of the type of service. Flows are improved by not providing too many access points and creating a single level.

**INFORMATION:** Provide an information/tourist information centre and more information at the vertical access points. Moderate advertising will be permitted.

**SECURITY:** Create more facilities at night for a sense of security.

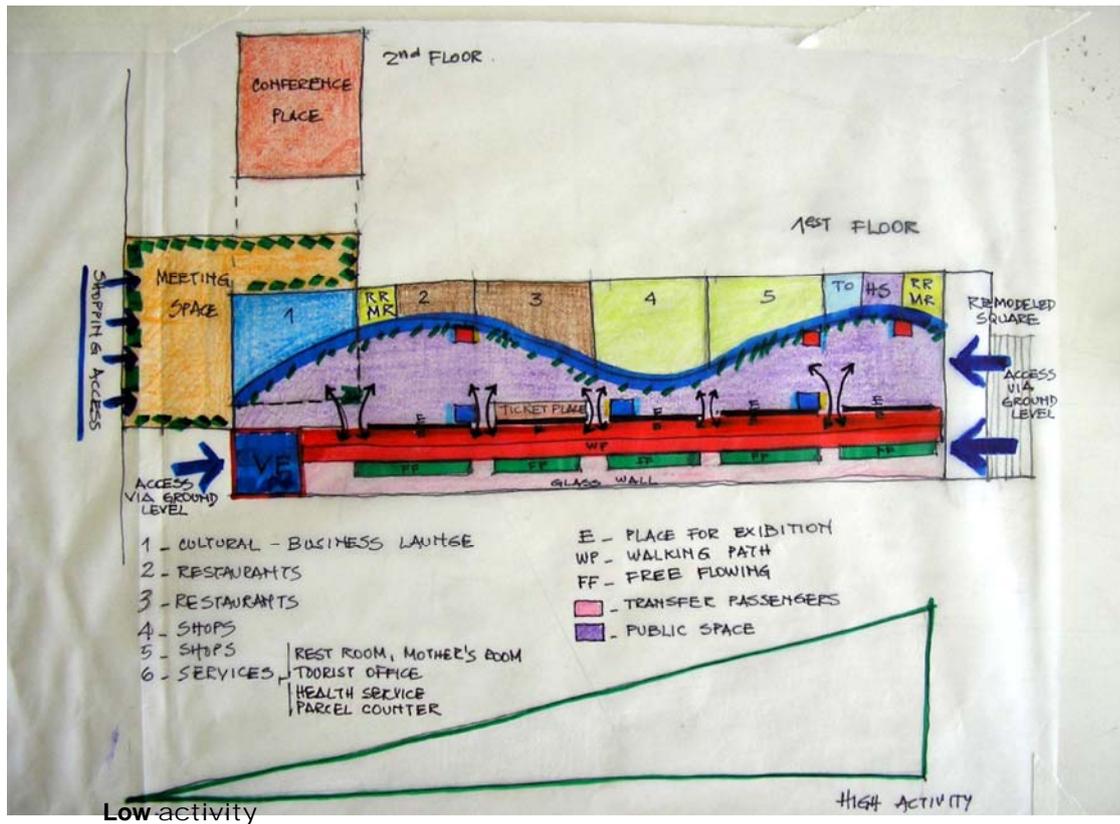
**FACILITIES:** Provide a broad range of facilities and give the user a choice. Clear definition of the intensity of facilities by creating passive and active places, e.g. shops and artists exhibition area within the public meeting place. Each enclave will have a common theme that will improve the efficiency and quality of the environment.

**INTERMODALITY:** It will be easy to find and access the bus and train service by creating a well-organized ground floor access to both types of transport.

**ATTRACTIVENESS:** Give the existing station environment a facelift by improving the image through architectural design by creating a pleasant and more intimate atmosphere.

## 5. Design

**Figure 5** Design concept, *The station as a meeting place*



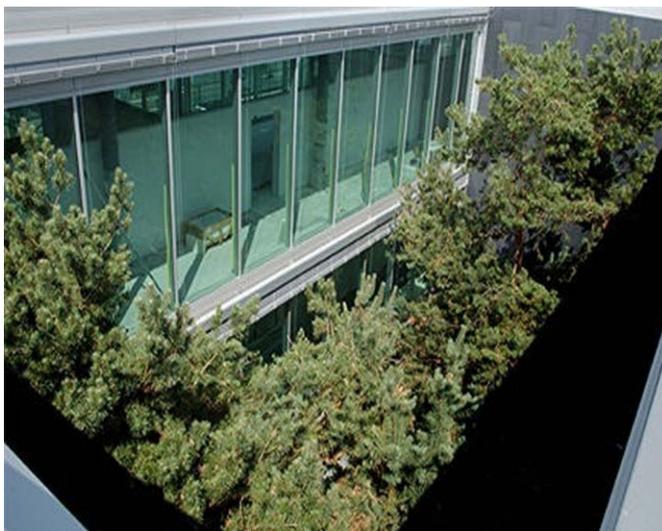
The above sketch shows the proposed revitalization design of the station. The design centres around a natural system, the blue curved line, which runs from the east entrance through the station to the west side where it connects to the proposed Catharijne canals. It is the element that has to reestablish a connection between the east and west side of the station. This green axis divides the station into two parts, a quiet part and a vivid bustling part. In the quiet part there is time to relax and recreate. Here one can enjoy the greenery within the station as well as look at some art that is exhibited here by young upcoming artists. In figure 5 this is illustrated by the letter 'E'. In the bustling part there is no time for this. The amenities predominantly located here are represented by the numbers 1 to 5. An activity pattern is proposed that varies from extensive in the east to highly active in the west side. A cultural business lounge is proposed in a part of the meeting hall. Here the traveler can wait in a pleasant environment for the train to come. On the second floor, on top of this lounge a conference hall is planned. The spacious central hall (very high ceiling) and the shortage of conference rooms make such a development possible within the station. Next to the lounge more intensive activities will take place. These vary from restaurants and shops to services. Regarding the flows of people two streams can be distinguished, a slow flow and a fast flow. The slow flow occurs in the bustling part. Here the proposed activities do not allow travelers to be in a hurry. It is an area which should be avoided by the passengers who only wish to transfer on this station, but if they have some time they are given the choice to do some shopping. It is completely up to them. The people that are in a hurry have the option to use the quiet area. In this area a fast flow will take

place. Here are, besides the possibility to look at some art and enjoy the greenery, no barriers that hinder a fast transfer to one of the other platforms. Furthermore this area provides people that only wish to use the station to reach the surrounding areas with a fast access. A so-called skywalk, like the similar ones to be found on many airports, allows for a fast and smooth connection. In the drawing the skywalk is represented by the red colour and the letters 'WP'. In order to avoid that the traveler is forced to make a choice beforehand the possibility is incorporated to go from the busy to the quiet area and vice versa. This is done in such a careful manner that the people who are really in a hurry are not disturbed by this. Because eventually the station needs to keep on going with the flow, now and in the future.

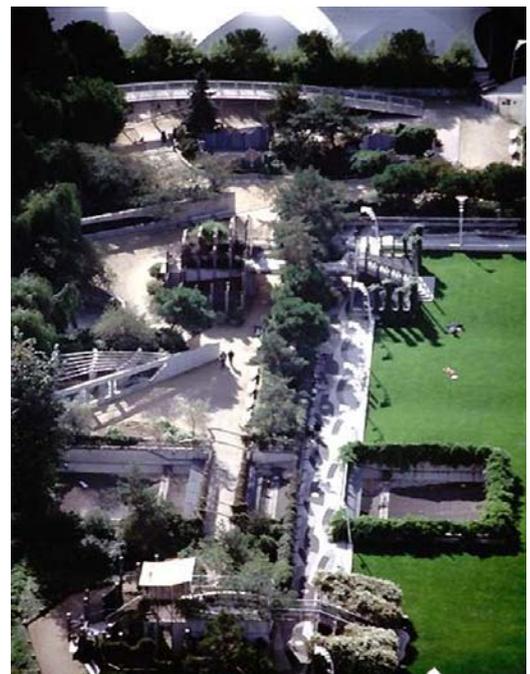
## 6. References

The images presented down below illustrate how the station could look like when it is redesigned. The emphasis is laid upon the implementation of a natural system inside the station and the transformation of the central hall in a meeting place. Both suggested measures are the most drastic ones and therefore are made more explicit by presenting some references.

### 1. Natural system inside the station



*ING House, Amsterdam, the Netherlands*



*Jardin des Plantes, Paris, France*

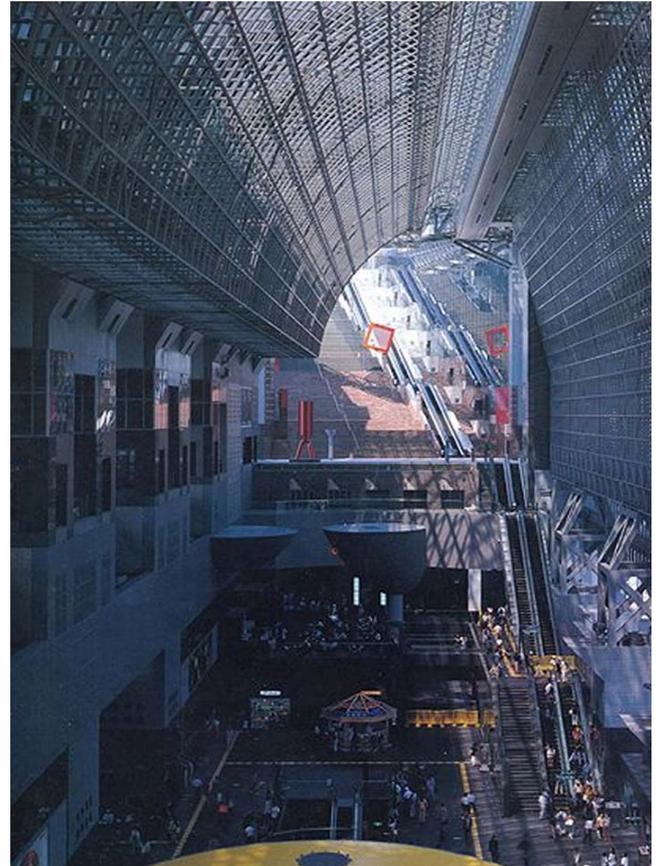


*Public space, Schiphol Airport, Haarlemmermeer, the Netherlands*

## 2. The Station as a meeting place



*Lobby Schiphol Airport, Haarlemmermeer, the Netherlands*



*Main Hall, Kyoto Central Station, Japan*



*Stuttgart Station, Germany*



*De Koopgoot, Rotterdam, the Netherlands*

## 7. Conclusion

The recommendations made in the preparation of the Utrecht Revitalization Plan go a long way to addressing the constraints of layout and appearance of the existing railway station. The new design, if implemented, has a number of advantages that will add to the multi-functionality of the railway station and simultaneously make optimal use of its central location. The approach of the design was twofold:

- Improving the performance of the station by “modernizing” it and by providing the required comforts for the passengers. The distinct approach being to provide the passenger with a choice of “what to do” and “where to go”.
- Changing the image of the railway station from being a “barrier” between the old and new city to that of a “gateway” to the old city. This has been achieved by creating a continuous theme or feeling of the old town into the station by way of a natural system of flora and water and meeting places.

It is hoped that the new design will be implemented and will add value to this already vital node of the city of Utrecht.

# UTRECHT STATION: CONNECTION AND RECONNECTION

## THE CONTEXT

### TRANSNATIONAL

NETWORKING  
EFFICIENCY  
ACTIVATION



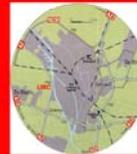
### REGIONAL

ACCESSIBILITY  
ATTRACTIVENESS  
COMPETITIVENESS



### LOCAL

IDENTITY  
INTEGRATION  
SAFETY  
FLEXIBILITY  
COMMUNICATION



FOCUS



## PROBLEMS

1. City vs Station
  - connectivity of the urban areas
  - function of the station for the city
2. Station as a shopping center
  - night safety
  - inefficient spatial organization
  - competitive to the city center
3. Organisation of the station
  - problematic walking routes
  - partially unrecognizable bus stops
  - unclear signalization
  - unrecognizable entrances
  - oversized corridors and halls
  - lack of night activities

## ADVANTAGES

- (trans)national/regional node
- accessibility of the city
- economical spin-off
- national recognizability
- city branding
- attraction for passengers
- various kinds and levels of services/shops
- regional and local area of influence
- complementary to the city center
- cultural/congres facilities near the station

## ACTORS

### PASSENGERS

- transit
- commuters
- leisure
- disabled

FAST FLOW  
SLOW FLOW



## OBJECTIVES

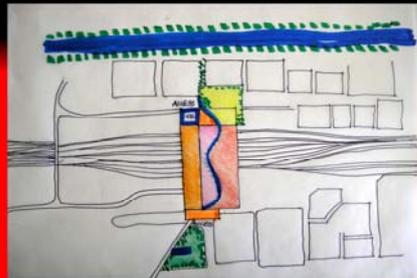
- IMPROVE PASSENGER CIRCULATION
- CREATE DISTINCT LAYERS
- VERTICAL/HORIZONTAL COMMUNICATION
- INTEGRATION WITH THE CITY STRUCTURE
- INTRODUCTION OF A NATURAL SYSTEM IN THE STATION
- MEET THE NEEDS OF VARIOUS USERS
- GIVE USERS A CHOICE

## DESIGN



# UTRECHT STATION: CONNECTION AND RECONNECTION

## THE BASIC CONCEPT "STATION AS A MEETING PLACE"



•SKETCH DESIGN•

•COMFORT – Provide pleasant waiting, rest and meeting areas. Clear a clean, airy, green and well protected environment. It will be well lit at night. The range of facilities and services that have defined themes will help users to feel comfortable in an environment that is user-friendly.

•ACCESS – Provide adequate access points for vertical movement and horizontal movement by improving the entrance areas and access to the train and bus platform at appropriate points. There will be less vertical elements to improve orientation but these will be more wide than in the current situation. Aside from the central ticket office there will be ticket machines provided at the access point and on the ground/platform level.

•FLOWS – Separation of Fast and Slow traffic by creating dual pathways. One is uninterrupted and open. The other has a number of enclaves that give the user a choice in terms of the type of service. Flows are improved by not providing too many access points and creating a single level.  
Information – Provide an information/tourist information center and more information at the vertical access points. Moderate advertising will be permitted.

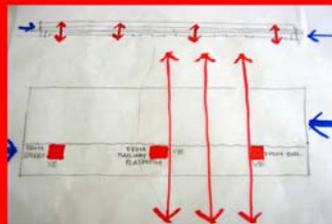
•SECURITY – Create more facilities at night for a sense of security

•FACILITIES – Provide a broad range of facilities and give the user a choice. Clear definition of the intensity of facilities by creating passive and active places i.e. Shops and Artists Exhibition area within the public meeting place. Each enclave will have a common theme that will improve the efficiency and quality of environment.

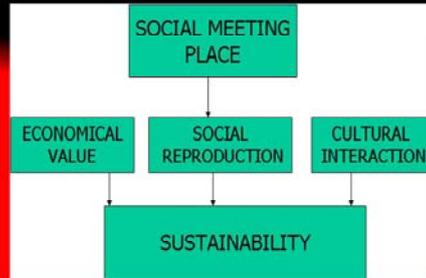
•INTERMODALITY – It will be easy to find and access the bus and train service by creating a well organized ground floor access to both types of transport.

•ATTRACTIVENESS – Give the existing station environment a face lift by improving the image through architectural design by creating a pleasant and more intimate atmosphere.

## MOBILITY



•INTEGRATION – Linkage of the station to the City by creating a homogeneous path from the station to the shopping center on the same level. Introduce water feature and canal way within the station that brings the city to the station and entices the user to move into the old city center.



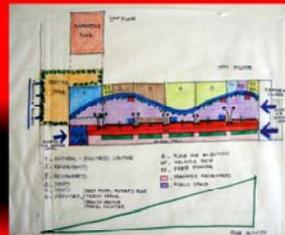
## MULTIPLE LEVELS



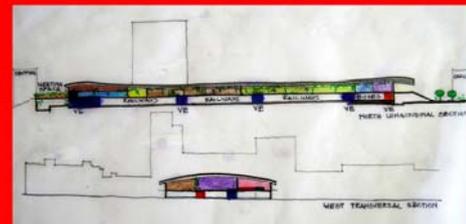
□ ORDINARY PASSENGERS - "SLOW FLOW"

■ VERTICAL ELEMENT

## GROUND LEVEL



## FIRST LEVEL SECTIONS



# **ANNEXES**

## Participants

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Paul Chorus is working at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands, Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning.

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Patricia Goldaracena is working at the Intendencia de Canelones, the local government institution that administrates an important part of the Metropolitan Area of Montevideo city. She also works in her own professional studio of Architecture and Urbanism, and teaches Urbanism at the ORT University.

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Gulsum Rustemoglu is currently working at RECON Environmental Inc. in San Diego, CA, USA, preparing environmental and planning analyses for a variety of land use projects.

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Aleksandra Stupar is doing her PhD studies on urban planning, globalization, urban morphology at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade.

**Raquel Tardin**

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By the time of the congress Raquel Tardin from Brazil was doing her PhD Thesis in Barcelona Technical School of Architecture, Spain.

**Eng Ricardo Veludo**

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Ricardo Veludo is starting up a public company for regional planning and development as CEO, teaching Urban Planning at the Real Estate School (ESAI, Lisbon) and starting a post-graduation in Advanced Business Administration at the Catholic University School of Economics.

**Coordinators**



*from left to right:*  
*Marie Fauconnet (Swiss LOC),  
Jutta Kulcke (Dutch Min. V&W)  
Zeynep Merey Enlil (ISoCaRP)*

*Fernando Brandão Alves (ISoCaRP)  
Emmy Bolsius (Dutch Min. VROM)*



## About ISoCaRP

ISoCaRP is a global association of experienced professional planners. It was founded in 1965 in a bid to bring together recognized and highly qualified planners in an international network. The ISoCaRP network consists of both individual and institutional members of more than 70 countries (It has members from countries all over the world).

ISoCaRP is a non-governmental organization recognized by the UN, UNCHS and the Council of Europe and has a formal consultative status with UNESCO.

The objectives of ISoCaRP include the improvement of planning practice through the creation of a global and active network of planners. ISoCaRP encourages the exchange between planners, promotes the profession in all aspects, stimulates research, improves education and training, increases information and awareness on major planning issues.

City- and Regional Planners act in spatial processes and are consultants to key decision-makers. Their task is to propose or support spatial interventions and plans on behalf of the society in general or specific actors. Planners combine knowledge, science, design and strategy and are used to work in joint ventures and multi-disciplinary teams.

The association's main event is the annual congress, which focuses on an international planning theme. The congress takes place in a different country every year, preferably on a different continent. ISoCaRP also organizes smaller scale seminars and publishes reports and other professional documents. It is represented at major international planning events.

## Admission of members

Planners wishing to join the Society should apply for membership to the National Delegation of their country - if there is such a delegation - or directly to the Secretariat, sending a short CV with a request for admission. Conditions for admission and the qualifications required - experience, creativity, work accomplished, publications, professional conduct - are laid down in the Articles of Association.

## ISoCaRP Congresses since 1995

2005 - Bilbao/Spain	Spaces for the creative Economy
2004 - Geneva/Switzerland	Management of Urban Regions - Experiences and new intervention policies
2003 - Cairo/Egypt	Planning in a more globalised and competitive World
2002 - Athens/Greece	The Pulsar Effect - Coping with peaks, troughs and repeats in the demand cycle
2001 - Utrecht/Netherlands	'Honey, I shrunk the Space' – Planning in the Information Age
2000 - Cancún/Mexico	People's Empowerment in Planning – Citizens as <i>actors</i> in managing their habitat
1999 - Gelsenkirchen/Germany	The Future of industrial Regions - Regional strategies and local Action towards sustainability
1998 - Azores/Portugal	Land and Water: Integrated planning for a sustainable future
1997 - Ogaki/Japan	Risk Assessment and Management: Planning for an uncertain future
1996 - Jerusalem/Israel	Migration and the global Economy: Planning responses to disintegrating patterns and frontiers
1995 - Sydney/Australia	Planning and Mediation in Urban Planning