

# THU THIEM NEW URBAN AREA



Ho Chi Minh City 2008  International Competition

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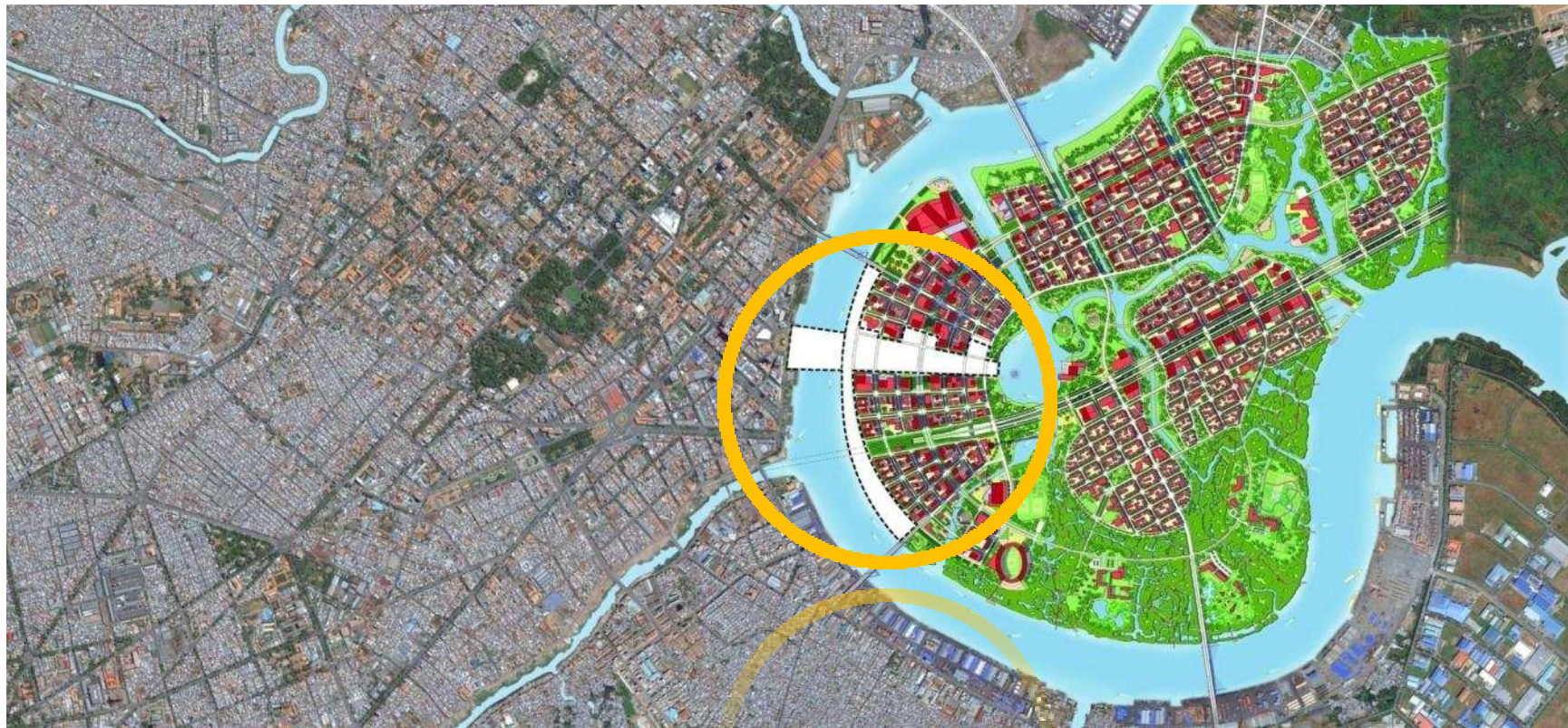
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## The Thu Thiem Site

The 657-hectare Thu Thiem peninsula is located along the east bank of the Saigon River, directly across from the central historic District 1 core area. The site has remained a wetland for many years, but is now about to be developed following the approval of a new master plan, comprising gross floor area of 6.2 million m<sup>2</sup>.

The Competition focuses on the most significant public areas within the Master Plan - **the Central Plaza** which should hold up to 1,000,000 people, **the Waterfront Park** as a new image of the city, and **the Saigon River Pedestrian Bridge** as an icon connecting the new development with the historic district.



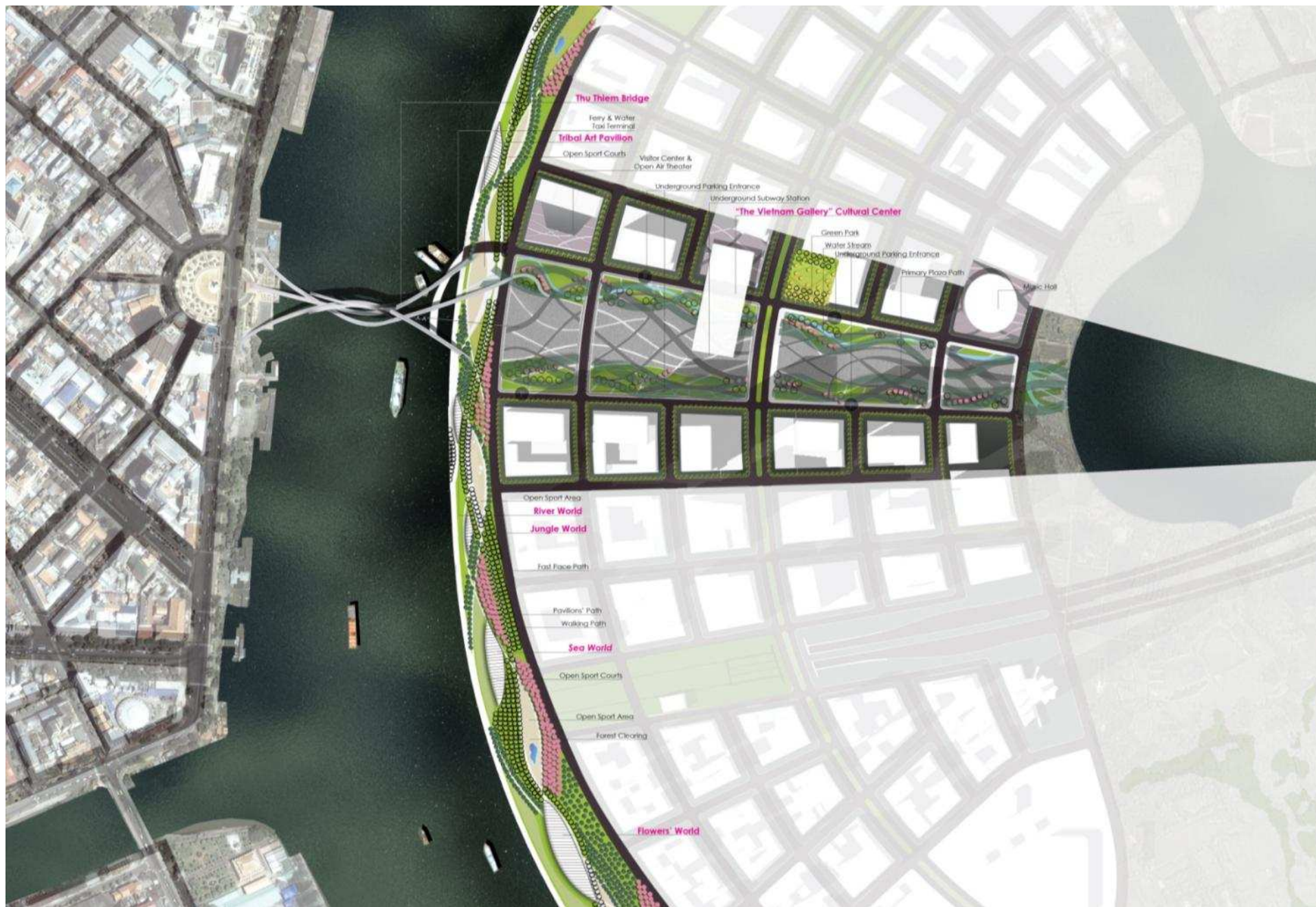


## Design Narrative

The design of the new public areas in Thu Thiem is a unique opportunity to create a highly significant national public space in Vietnam with a world wide reputation. The main goal of the proposal is the creation of a vibrant public sphere which sustains and enhances local culture and environment, while also becoming a new branding symbol and stimulus for the emerging exciting image of Ho Chi Minh City.

**Following these challenges the proposal emerged out of three major lines of thought:**





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Site Plan





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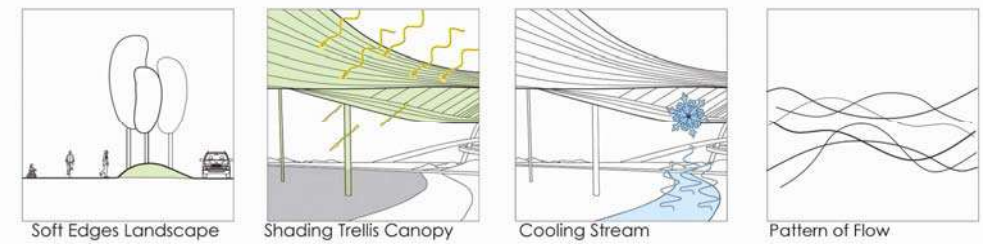
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Bird's Eye View From The West

**The HCMC Plaza** is to become the largest place for public gatherings in Vietnam, hosting all year round events as well as the practice of everyday life and culture. A pattern of diverging and converging paths is imprinted onto the surface of the plaza, breaking its rigid structure. This allows for fluidity of movement and informal interactions, making it possible for a large variety of activities to occur simultaneously.

While having its centre open for various formal and informal events, soft edges were made for calmer and weather mediated spaces. Sculptured soft hills, trees and waterscapes are combined with a series of winding green trellis canopies which create a comfortable microclimate, protecting from sun and rain. A stream of water is meandering along the entire length of the northern part of the plaza, providing an opportunity for a range of cooling water features for kids combined with beautiful options for wetland vegetation gardening.







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HCMC Plaza & The Vietnam Gallery





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Shaded Area Under Green Trellis in HCMC Plaza



**The Vietnam Gallery Cultural Center** introduced to the HCMC Plaza, reflects the proposal's spirit which places the public at the fore front of this project. Offering an upper level extension of the Plaza, the proposed national Cultural Center creates a grand elevated urban terrace which is available to every person. This significant structure, hovering above the plaza and allowing an uninterrupted free flow on ground level, suggests an outstanding opportunity for a variety of indoor and outdoor public uses. Aside from serving as a national Sculpture Garden, the elevated terrace is an ideal platform for performances, concerts, speeches, and a public observation point of both sides of the plaza and the city. Placed as the focal point of the plaza and HCMC the new Vietnam Gallery is designed to become an iconic urban landmark which combines attractive national exhibits together with a unique elevated urban space for public use.

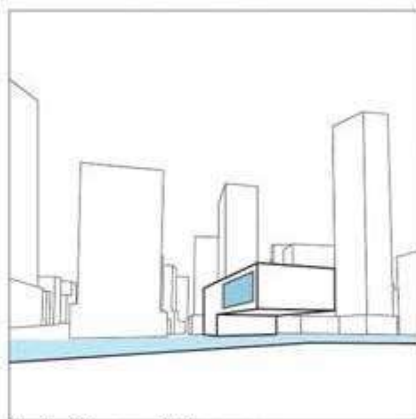


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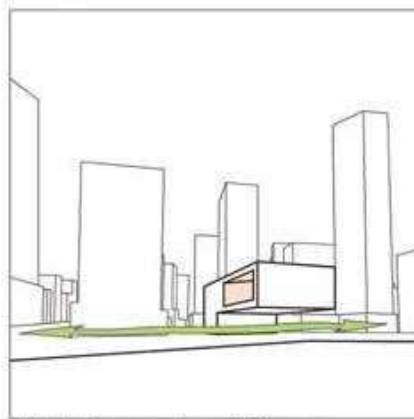
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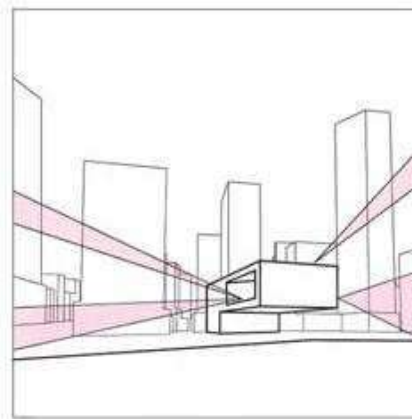
View Through the Vietnam Gallery



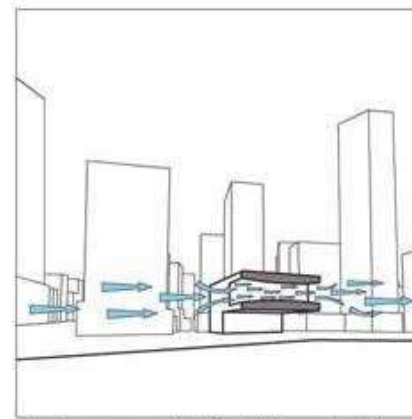
Additional Upper  
Level Plaza



Uninterrupted Flow



Public Stage &  
Observation Point



Enhanced Air Circulation





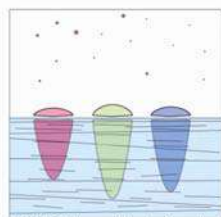
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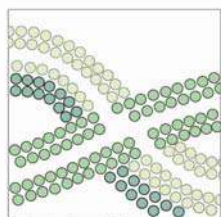
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Performance at the Vietnam Gallery

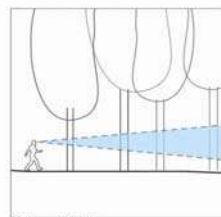




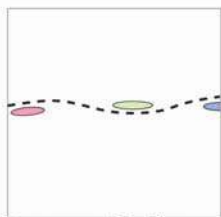
HCMC New Waterfront



Intertwined Walkways

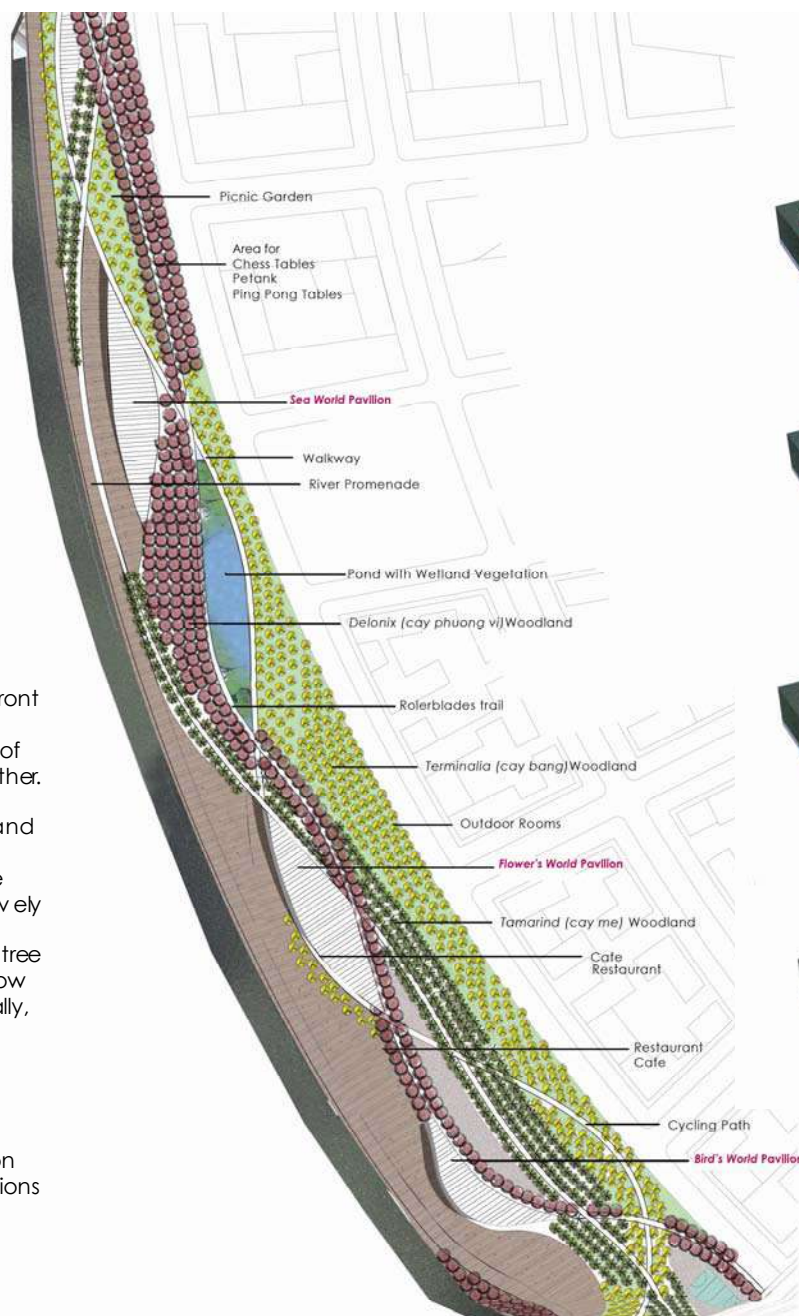


Clear Vistas

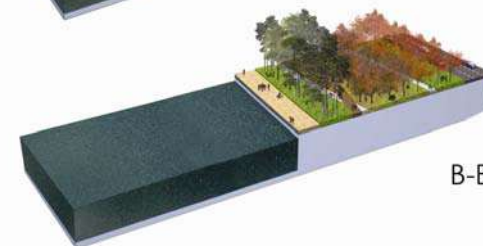


Sequence of Pavilions

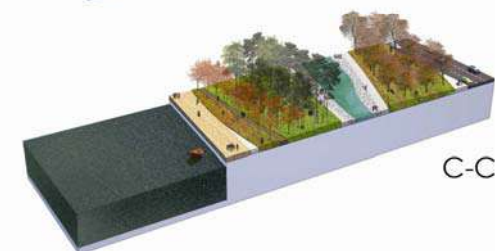
**The Woodland Park** is proposed both as a quality nature and recreation area, and as an opportunity to create a new spectacular waterfront view to be enjoyed from across the river. The proposed park meanders along the river in strips of forest and promenade interwoven into one another. By using a variety of materials and surfaces, the park offers a sensual rich range of atmospheres and tempos. The intertwined strips of the park are planted with a selection of common Vietnamese species such as Delonix and Terminalia in a relatively dense woodland, with occasional clearings for outdoor playfields and other sport activities. The tree canopies are maintained above eye level to allow clear vistas throughout the park. Programmatically, the added sequence of six pavilions includes a variety of functions related to Vietnam's natural environment, such as: Sea World, Flowers' World, Birds' World, Jungle World and Ethnic art. The pavilions which rely on PV solar energy, are illuminated at night creating a beautiful reflection onto the Saigon River. This series of glowing pavilions offer a remarkable new waterfront image, to be seen from the historic Ho Chi Minh City.



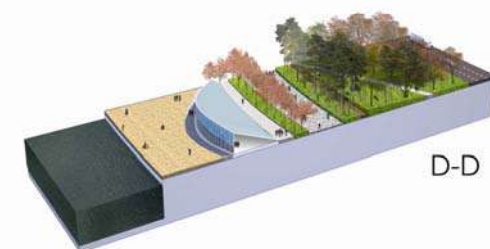
A-A



B-B



C-C



D-D





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A Pavilion in the Woodland





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River Promenade View





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Forest Clearing With a Pond





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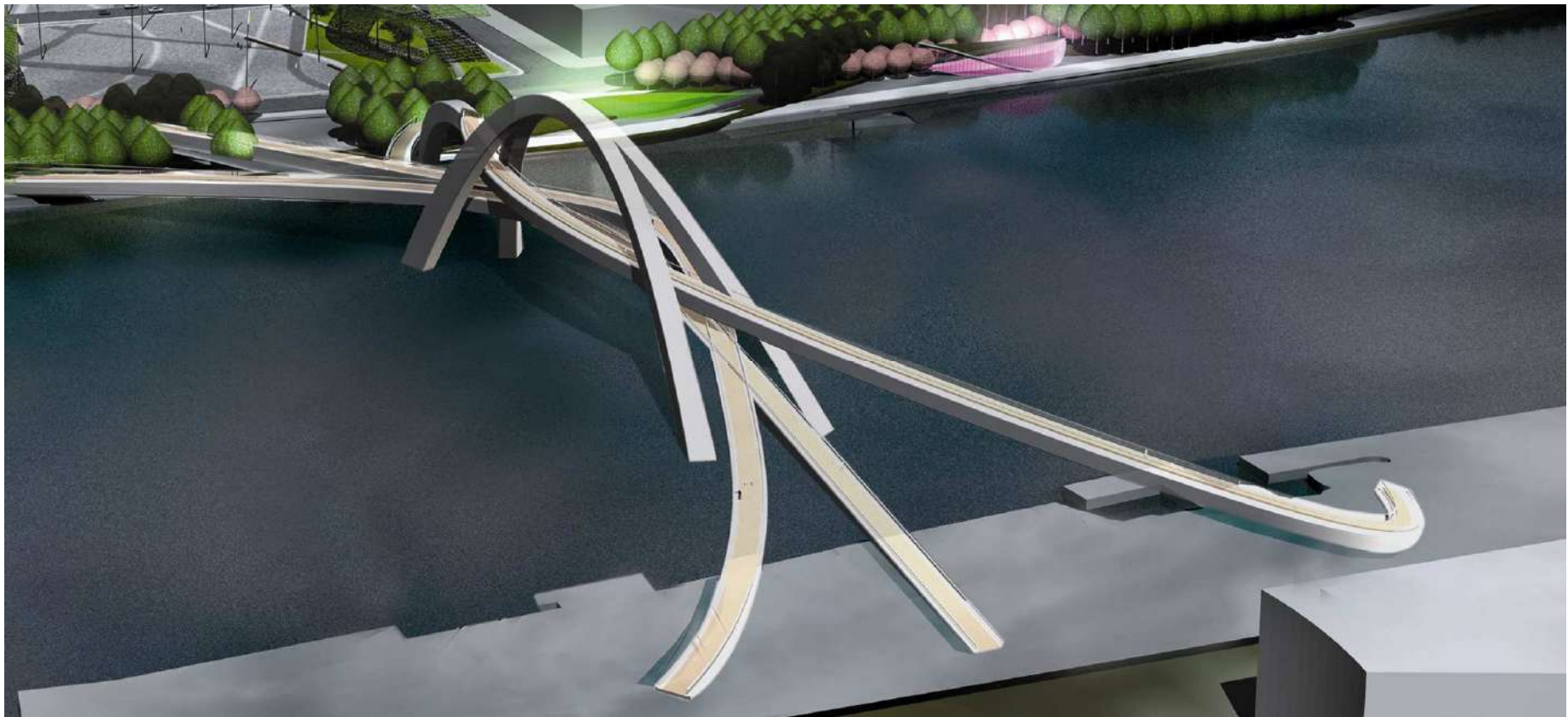
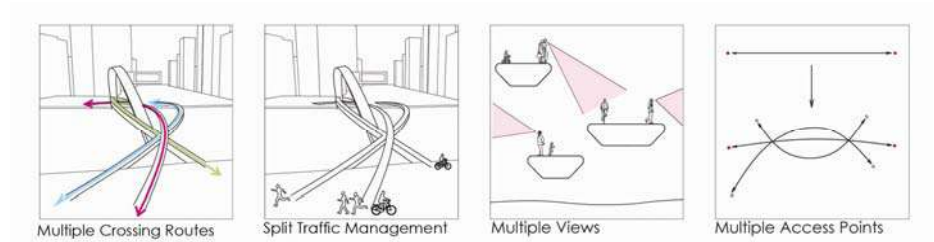
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Promenade Night View



**The Thu Thiem Footbridge** is a construction of suspended intertwined routes, connecting multiple embarking points on either sides of the Saigon River. This Plait Bridge, binding and bonding District 1 with Thu Thiem, is designed to serve as a new icon and symbol for HCMC - a manifestation of the city's emerging new spirit which binds together past, present and future. The unique quality of various pathways rather than a single one, has many advantages. It allows multiple departure and landing points, thus cutting walking distances short and reducing bottle necks. Moreover it turns the river crossing into a unique experience of excitement, with multi leveled observation options, an attraction for daily users and tourists alike. Moreover, the multi-path crossing system becomes a simple tool for traffic management of both pedestrians and cyclists, by allowing alteration of flow direction, or controlled allocation of paths according to change in traffic demand around the clock.







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Plaza View From the Bridge



## Sustainability Strategy

Environmental responsibility in this grand and complex land reclamation operation holds physical aspects along with social and cultural ones. As a strategic point of departure for integrating the built structures and the natural environment, we began by looking at the Saigon River and its unique morphology of flow. The river becomes the inspiring generator of this project, in the attempt to create a harmonious relationship between nature and culture. Inspired by this bond, we propose the hybrid of natural and artificial elements, to create a variety of hospitable public spaces. Introducing a network of favored outdoor areas for the city dwellers, places where local culture can be both expressed and formed, is seen as a major sustainable act. Moreover, environmentally responsive design principles were applied according to the following:

### Protect

Creating friendly, shaded microclimate areas, protected from the elements.



Shaded Green Zones

Covered Dry Walkways

### Harness

Harness - Exploiting solar energy to be used for lighting on the site and using recycled materials and green technologies for the various street elements.



Solar Energy via PV Panels

"Green" Street Furniture

### Heal

Applying intensive woodland planting combined with native wetland vegetation reinstates the natural environment and operates as "Green Lungs" for the area. Using pervious surfaces and green roofs minimizes excess run off.



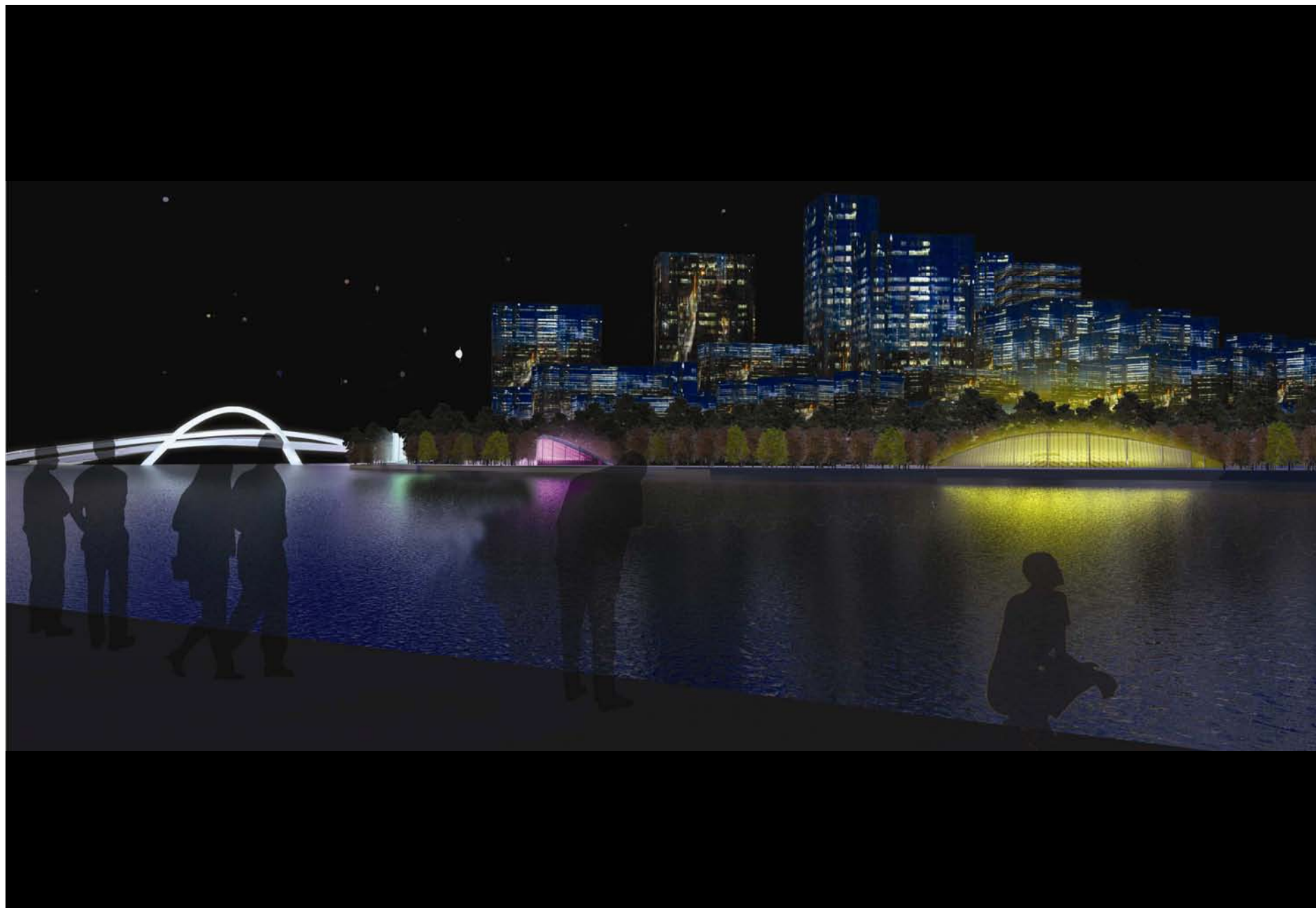
Intensive Woodland Planting

Native Wetland Vegetation



Maximizing Pervious Surfaces

"Green Sprawl" throughout (Recommended Green Roofs & Intensive Tree Plantation)



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The New Waterfront at Night



## About Us

**Mayslits Kassif Architects** is a leading contemporary firm in Tel Aviv. The practice was founded by Ganit Mayslits Kassif & Udi Kassif in 1994, and has been involved in a variety of projects in the fields of urban planning, public buildings, housing, retail and landscape urbanism.

We are committed to intelligent, skillful and inspiring architecture. Our design process is of a multi-disciplinary nature, and reflects our belief in distinctive architecture as the key generator of successful projects

Since 1997 Mayslits Kassif Architects has won several major public competitions such as: the Remez-Arlozorov Cultural Center in Tel Aviv, the regeneration of Ashdod City Center, the regeneration of the Tel Aviv Port and the planning competition for the Natural Gas Stations.

Following the success of the Tel Aviv Port development our practice was awarded the prestigious "Oscar" of Israeli Design – *Ot Haitzuv Design Award* – for the best urban architectural project in Israel 2007.

For more details, see our website: [www.mkarchitects.com](http://www.mkarchitects.com)