



3

### Contemporary Art Museum of China 中國現代美術館

There is no better place to enjoy the modern artworks of China than in this near-modern stylistic museum in Beijing. Opened in 1963, it is considered as one of Ten Great Modern Buildings in China 中國十大建築. It consists of five floors of 20 vast rooms sufficiently flexible to house themed exhibitions as well as the best collection of modern visual art in China.

Its design belongs to a style often known as “Chinese Renaissance”, arising from the ideology of the early generations of modern architects, dedicated to the disciplined harmonization of traditional Chinese architectural aesthetics with modernist functional requirements. The external form of this building, called the Multi-level Hipped-Gable 多層歇山頂 Glazed Tiled Roof, was inspired by the multiple overhanging roofs of ancient timber temples in front of the Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang 敦煌莫高窟. The architect Dai Nan-ci 戴念慈 cleverly integrated the complex geometry and proportion of the ancient Chinese timber



4

tower with a concrete structure that houses a tall internal atrium and multiple floors of art galleries. It demonstrates the thorough understanding of strictly disciplined ancient details, decorations, and structural language of Chinese architecture in a manner unmatched by most contemporary half-cooked neo-ancient imitations over China today.

Its successful holding of many internal modern art touring exhibitions with millions of visitors is good proof of its popularity and functionality. Nowadays this museum focuses on modern artworks that express the cultural richness of modern China, from works by the early masters like Xu Bei-hong 徐悲鴻 who introduced Western inspirations to Chinese ink brush paintings, to modern masters like Huang Yung-yu 黃永玉 who integrates the richness of traditional Chinese colour and geometry with modern topics. Both the artworks and the building are truly in keeping with this confident aspiration of the Chinese people today in converging traditional cultural values with modern international perspective.



### UCCA at Beijing 798 Art Village 北京798 藝術區尤倫斯當代藝術中心

Today, the name of 789 district of Beijing is almost a catchword in China equivalent to cultural and artistic freedom. From the initial discovery and invasion of this deteriorating industrial district by independent artists and small scale art dealers, who turned various normally unsightly factories and power-houses into workshops and galleries, this place has now evolved into the most trendy cultural venue in China today. The manner that artists and architects adaptive reuse these crude and un-usual utilitarian structures into exhibition spaces, or even cooling towers or open drain reservoirs into architectural and landscape elements, is really innovative and stunning.

The Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art (UCCA), opened in November 2007, is arguably one of the most inspiring places in the district. The building is said to be the largest Bauhaus factory in China characterized by its long strip windows and long-span concrete portal frames. The bold and minimalist

architecture became the perfect environment for equally stunning art collections. The architect executed restraint and innovation by mere minimum additions like plain white partitions, louvred glass roofs, and simple facilities like libraries and offices in white walls and glass screens. The Swiss UCCA Foundation, founded by the Ullens couple who fell in love with modern art in China when carrying out business in China, is one of the biggest private collectors of Chinese modern art. This UCCA, as an Art Centre, is amongst the few non-profit making exhibition venues in the 789 district

One of the first major exhibitions held here was the "85 New Wave" 「85新潮」 show in 2008. It featured works of Chinese artists in mid 80s, acknowledged to be one of the most energetic era of modern China. At that moment when China first opened to the market economy and world culture, neither the government nor the artists themselves were aware of the monumental changes to the cultural exposure that were to come about in next three decades. Artists tried out every type of limited resources, tested every boundary previously taken as



taboo, and re-approached every aspect of moral dilemma encountered by that confused generation. The results were some of the most memorable images of modern Chinese art that shocked the world, including the famous big laughing mouths, by Yu Minjun 岳敏君 and Heaven's Book 天書 by Xu Bing 徐冰.

The innovative and daring adaptive re-use of UCCA challenges the imagination of Chinese modern architects and urban planners in the concept of built-heritage and urban environment, just like the way contemporary artists evoke our values and preconceptions. At this crossroad of cultural interface between China and the world, this is the place for all of us to visit and reflect our views of art, architecture and indeed our culture.

Images:

1. Capital Museum External View
2. Capital Museum Interior View
3. Contemporary Art Museum of China External View
4. Contemporary Art Museum of China Interior View
5. Beijing 798 District Streetscene
6. Beijing 798 District UCCA Interior

#### Edward, LEUNG Yee-Wah

Practicing architect at Aedas Ltd.  
Academic Director for HKU Space Cultural Heritage Management Programme.  
Member of Heritage and Conservation Committee of HKIA.  
Central Oasis Community Advisory Committee member.

General working experience for commercial and community projects.  
Special interest in Conservation and Heritage works including:  
Guangyu Ancestral Hall Restoration, Conghua, Guangzhou,  
(UNESCO Award of Excellence 2003), Mallory Street Revitalization for URA  
(2010 - now), Tsing Shan Monastery Restoration (2009 - 2011), and made  
presentations on various forums on conservation topics.

# Dalian Times Square

Leigh & Orange Ltd.



Located in an inner city district of the charming city of Dalian, in North East China, Dalian Times Square has turned the precinct into a modern, vibrant shopping oasis lined with high-end shops, cafes as well as making contribution to the civic qualities by adding rhythm to the Dalian skyline. There were attempts to make reference to the classical architecture, which are highly prized in a city so rich in its stories of foreign occupations and its return to China. Eventually, the designers and the client together adopted a contemporary and timeless interpretation – making the building complex a bold statement with, nevertheless, subtles and fine detailing. This reflects, accurately, the kind of fine branding and selected clientele it wants to accommodate.

The project was completed in March 2009. It consists of two residential towers, 34 and 47 storey respectively, on top of a 2-storey shopping podium and a 3-storey car park basement. The shopping podium actually allows shops to occupy duplex unit and have their own two storey shop front abutting the street. Two residential towers contain 675 apartment units in total, of





sizes ranging from 1 bedroom unit to deluxe duplex units. A residential clubhouse is located at the 3rd and 4th floor of Tower B, and an amenity landscape deck is located on the podium roof to provide hotel like leisure facilities for the city dwellers. The total countable GFA is approximately 140,000sq.m. The building structure incorporates design allowing resistance also to stringent earthquake requirements.

In the master planning of this project, the local civic context is highly respected. The orientation of the building is related to the civic street alignment, and also extends it towards the sea in the north of the site. The internal spatial planning of shopping podium re-creates the “urban street” and introduces the concept of “shopping gallery”.

The overall massing of the project was in response to the local sunlight requirements while maximizing the development potential as well as the precious sea view. The top floors of the towers step back progressively creating condominium units and

terraces. The dignified and modern form with delicate architectural detailing presents a graceful and unique identity to the building appropriate for its high-end shops and luxury apartments.

Sustainability was a major concern throughout the design and construction stages. Energy saving, sunlight effect, material recycling, efficiency, accessibility, universal design and provision of green roof were carefully reviewed and strategies were incorporated into the design to achieve sustainability.

Dalian Times Square has now become a new landmark in the city of Dalian.

Location	: Dalian, China
Design Architect & Lead Consultant	: Leigh & Orange Ltd.
Retail Architect	: Arquitectonica
Interior Design	: Cream
Site Area	: 17,500m <sup>2</sup>
Plot Ratio	: 8
Gross Floor Area	: 139,500m <sup>2</sup>
Site Coverage	: 58%
Green Ratio	: 10%
Client / Developer	: Wharf Estate China Limited

# From Railway Tracks to a Living Sustainable City Artery

## Masterplan design for Victory Avenue in Shijiazhuang

The 1<sup>st</sup> masterplanning design by a Hong Kong based international firm, TFP Farrells, under HKIA auspices, was appointed by the City Government under the sponsorship of the Provincial Government.

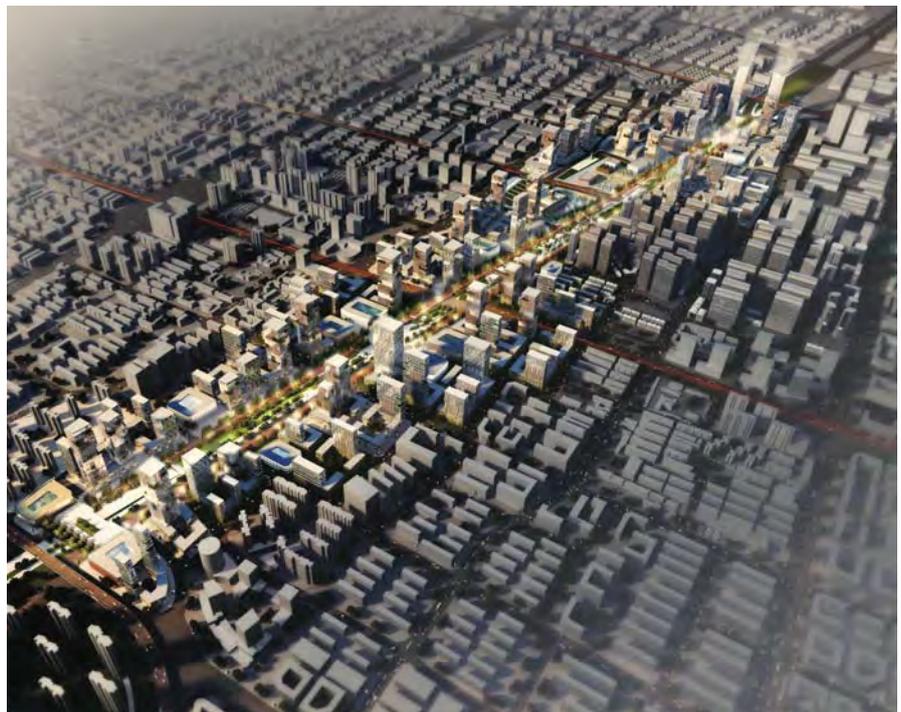
### TFP Farrells

The Shijiazhuang Victory Avenue Masterplan Design Proposal is a masterplanning project under HKIA auspices and appointed by the Shijiazhuang City Government. Negotiated and coordinated, from initiation to the tendering of project appointment, by the Board of Mainland Affairs of HKIA, TFP Farrells was awarded the project in 2010. This is the first time through HKIA, a Hong Kong based firm would be appointed to design a masterplan in China.

Located in the heart of Shijiazhuang, the capital of Hebei Province, a railway link along Victory Avenue slices through the old city center in a north-south axis. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Shijiazhuang has been a city developed along the railway and it has provided an important trading link between key Chinese Cities, from Wuhan to Beijing, and from Taiyuan to Jinan. The old city district of Shijiazhuang, now home to 2.7 million

residences and growing, plans to build a new train station and upgrade its railway link along the initial alignment, to become part of the important Jingguang Railway, a high speed railway network from Guangzhou (with the southward extension to Hong Kong via the Express Rail Link, under construction, in which TFP Farrells is also involved) to Beijing.

The Victory Avenue masterplan poses many challenges yet there are many opportunities that will revitalize the once divided city center. Currently, railroad tracks running along Victory Avenue split the old city core, resulting in districts of distinct characters disorganized and disconnected from each other. Key road junctions are far apart from each other and lack key destinations and attractions. In addition, there is a shortage of public spaces and amenities for people to enjoy the city. With the proposal to lower the railway tracks to below ground, Victory Avenue could serve as the vital access on the north-south axis intersecting the major ring roads of the city.



1

Vibrant and Diverse City Artery

The proposal begins with creating a city centre around the old train station and the surrounding historical buildings in the reclaimed land. Rehabilitating these buildings will retain their historical significance yet provide new opportunities and attractions to the city core. The city is rejoined with intimate links to districts and destinations. Street frontages will be improved to become the backdrop of the avenue and serve as the filter to other buildings and districts beyond. The project can be broken down into the following key figures and concepts.

**11** kilometers of Victory Avenue, the length of the masterplan area between Shi Tai Expressway and the new train station, seizes the opportunity of the proposed relocation of railway tracks to underground. The design aims to transform Victory Avenue from a city barrier to a living, green connector. As mentioned, this stretch of Victory Avenue will stitch the city core back together. However, one of the key challenges is the design width of Victory Avenue. Spanning 140m, twice the width of Champs Elysees, the excess voids need to be activated, fused with landscaped spaces, recreations and events. A light rail/tram system is proposed along the center of Victory Avenue to reduce walking distances, and provide a great way to travel from one node to another with views of the revitalized city center. A stop at every 500m, pedestrians can seamlessly access various destinations including the proposed metro system, and the new train station. The masterplan aims to create a sustainable and effective green spine with undulating skyline and lay down a set of strategies of land use to revitalize the entire vicinity.

**3** Sectors are identified along the 11km stretch of Victory Avenue. They are: 1) from 2<sup>nd</sup> Ring Road North to He Ping Road, mainly residential; 2) between He Ping Road to Huai An Road where the tracks will be sunken and with the most design opportunities with mixed uses, and central green landscapes; and 3) from Huai An Road southward to 2<sup>nd</sup> Ring Road South with developments surrounding the proposed new train station.

**7** Zones with distinct identities with strategic yet flexible planning are proposed across the 3 sectors.

**Sustainable Living Zone**

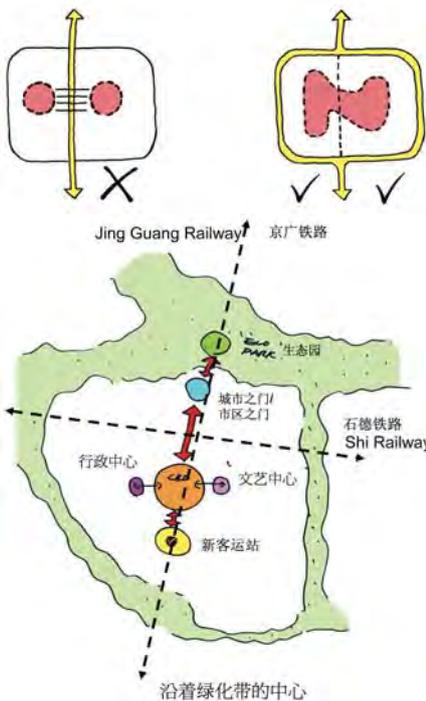
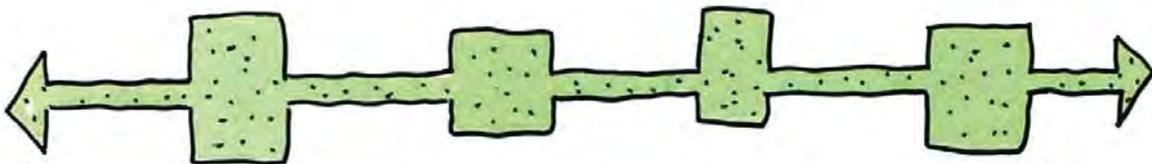
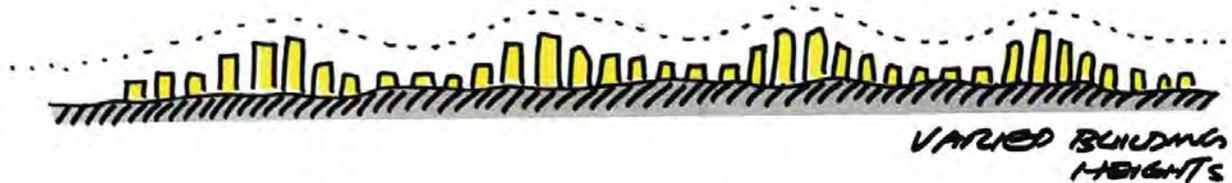
Improved living and related amenities, along with the varying and attractive green features, provide an ideal form of low-density residential district.

**Research and Education Zone**

Designed for advanced research facilities focusing on research and development, a campus atmosphere is created. The area is planned for a learning environment that enhances creativity and production drawing talented employees from all over China.

**Gateway Plaza Area**

A gateway to the old city centre with landmark towers are proposed, marking the symbolic entrance to the new vibrant city. Grade A offices will attract multi-nationals and corporations to set up their headquarters here generating businesses and tax to



enhance the growth of Shijiazhuang. Large public plazas fill the spaces between buildings encourage public use 24 hours a day for outdoor events, gatherings or simply a lunch break.

### Historical and Cultural Zone

This zone focuses on rejuvenating the old train station and the existing historical landmarks and connect them with an underground retail network. This is meant to retain and enhance the richness of the culture and history of Shijiazhuang while adding value and activities to the area.

### Leisure and Entertainment Zone

Shopping centers, entertainment and leisure functions take up the area south of Yuhua Road. Raised decks with greenery connect the retail shops on both sides of Victory Avenue, providing a seamless pedestrian connection. An area which not only provides the city dwellers a place to enjoy themselves and spend time with friends and family, but the concentrated high-end flagship shops and entertainment centers will attract tourists from neighboring cities boosting the city as a tourist destination.

### Recreation Zone

Located north of Huaian Road, recreational facilities with convenient access for the nearby residents are planned. Raised decks across Victory Avenue provide connection with the central green spine. Family and group activities will fill the area with gatherings and events on the weekends. Street festival and markets brings the neighbourhood together.

### Transport Hub Zone

The new train station will enhance adjacent development, creating a transport business hub with office buildings, shopping malls and hotels. As a key arrival point to the city, the convention center and hotels are just minutes away for the business travelers. This hub also conveniently connects to the subway and light rail systems.

**6** Nodes are formed along Victory Avenue to create new hubs for living, working, retail and recreation. Building upon the planned transport network, nodes along Victory Avenue will be well connected and each with an identity and theme serving as the focal point for each zone.

The nodes are designed as connectors catering for pedestrian use and circulation. These points are all within a walking distance of 500m and appear in different levels. For example, the Heritage Node comprises of a Heritage Square with historical buildings and monument such as the Zhen Tai Hotel,

the old Train Station Museum, Stone Bridge and People's Liberation Monument, has a sunken plaza with links to below ground retail streets. The City Gate Plaza node is the 'marker' for the Victory Avenue spine with flanking office towers and large plazas at the base. This gateway identifies the start of the diversified central spine. Finally, the Entertainment and Recreation Decks are landscape decks with sky gardens forming a multi-level connection to feature shopping malls, sports halls and recreation centers. Victory Avenue is re-shaped as a boulevard by bringing nature in and creating nodes, all to improve city living environments, creating new hubs for living, working, retail and recreation.

**10** Design principles are proposed as the framework for the transformation and development of the masterplan.

### 1 Legible City

Building on the existing fabric of the city to explore the opportunities of rejoining the city. Victory Avenue will become a real connector, part of the fabric of the city, in the north-south direction with clear connections with east-west streets and activities. Rather than having a railroad that splits the old city centre, Victory Avenue will become the hub of the city occupying on different levels. The city centers will rejoin and become one again.

### 2 Building On The Past to a Legacy For The Future

As mentioned earlier, Shijiazhuang has been an important transportation interchange node throughout history. It is also an important commercial and industrial centre for Hebei and Shanxi provinces. The improved Jingguang rail link will further expand the economic development in the fields of pharmaceutical, textile, chemical and electronic products. Victory Avenue will be the urban business centre for such growth.

### 3 Rejoin the City

The existing railroad divided the city centre. With the relocation of railway below ground and the regeneration of Victory Avenue above ground, the city will be stitched back as one entity. The barrier that once divided the city will unite people, material flow and activities.

### 4 A New City Centre

The new city centre will integrate all the ingredients for a functional and sustainable city. Various zones and nodes will incorporate elements of arts, education, events, recreation, commerce, and culture. Residential communities will be in close proximities providing the live-work culture of a vibrant city center.

