



POLITECNICO
DI TORINO

Honors thesis

Master of Science in Sustainable Architecture

And

Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Planning

Abstract

"SMALL IS MORE: The end of suburbanization - A new sales format for the retail industry."

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In the last twenty years, we have witnessed the evolution of a worrying scenario that is mainly affecting North America and today does not seem to come to any positive conclusion.

Hundreds of places, once the hub of commercial activities and more, lie abandoned or underutilized, waiting for an imminent fate, whatever it may be. Certainly, the causes should be studied specifically, evaluating the features of each case, but the main purpose of this study is to report the occurrence of two phenomena: firstly, a regular increase of dead-malls present in the suburbs of the cities; secondly a trend change affecting modern stores which are accordingly scaled-down and to be included in the lively modern cities.

To test this latest trend, which seems to have convinced many partners in the retail industry, the choice fell on the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania because it does not show evident developments of those mini-stores that are starting a new trend in the retail industry.

The present work, therefore, will be divided into two main parts: the first will analyse the trends mentioned above through a continuous comparison with the models designed in the past, while the second part will concern the design of one or more scenarios included in the city's vacant lands. The final objective will be to demonstrate how, in the last twenty years, the development of shopping centers has changed considerably and how the commercial partners who until recently have covered the American territory with huge structures are returning to repopulate the city by approaching their consumers again with an innovative format, redesigned as a corner shop.