



## **Designing Urban Transformation by Prototype: A Case Study Analysis of Las Vegas**

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The paper examines the idea of the prototype in urban design and its impact on the city through a case study analysis one of the largest and most high profile urban design projects in the United States, CityCenter in Las Vegas, Nevada. With a total development of nearly 18 million square feet over 67 acres on one of the most well known streets in the world, the Strip in Las Vegas, CityCenter epitomizes innovative urban design in a number of ways: an assembly of star architects in one project, casino and hotel design at the cutting edge, impressive sustainability ambitions, and its role as an “urban center.”

A close study of the project reveals mixed success between stated project goals and actual implementation, and highlights the potential and pitfalls of introducing innovative change in the city through singular and spectacular design innovation. The article analyzes the innovative qualities of the project within the context of Las Vegas, including its claim to being an urban center in terms of density, mix of land uses, and pedestrian amenities. The paper concludes by suggesting that the project’s cutting edge architecture and urban feel is as much a themed environment as the neighboring hotels and casinos on the Strip, albeit with some public—and surprising—benefits for the future design of the city.

**KEY WORDS:** Urban transformation, design prototype, Las Vegas.