

# FAQs

## 1. What is Arcosanti?

Arcosanti is an experimental town and molten bronze bell casting community that has been developed by the Italian American architect, Paolo Soleri, who began construction in 1970 in central Arizona.

Using a concept he called ARCOLOGY, he started the town to demonstrate how urban conditions could be improved while minimizing the destructive impact on the earth.

He taught and influenced generations of architects and urban designers who studied and worked with him there to build the town. The goal of Arcosanti is to explore the concept of arcology, which combines architecture and ecology.

The town has the goals of combining the social interaction and accessibility of an urban environment with sound environmental principles, such as minimal resource use and access to the natural environment.

The project is building an experimental town on 25 acres of a 4,060-acre land preserve.

Most buildings are oriented southward to capture the Sun's light and heat roof designs admit the maximum amount of sunlight in the winter and a minimal amount during the summer.

The bronze-casting apse is built in the form of a quarter-sphere or semi-dome.

The layout of the buildings is intricate and organic, rather than a city grid, with a goal of maximum accessibility to all elements, and a combination of increased social interaction and bonds, together with privacy for the residents.

It is constructed of both poured-in-place and precast concrete. The Apse shell was poured in place utilizing silt on shoring to form the quarter-sphere.

The tempered micro-climate created by the Apse Effect, the amphitheater terracing, and the removable stage that can be erected over the slip bins combine to provide an excellent performance space.

The city has never been officially finished, and while the current population wavers around 80, the town was designed to sustain some 5,000.

## **2. How was Paolo Soleri influential in building a new kind of a city?**

Begun in 1972 and completed in 1974, East Housing has been used as shared housing. The construction process was a combination of poured-in-place concrete and precast panels.

The vaulted ceilings are decorated with large siltcast designs and the bathroom floors are done with ceramic tile murals made on site.

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Living quarters are clustered in a honeycomb of sparse, minimalist apartments, all virtually identical. The buildings and walkways are built in a more dynamic formation than a conventional city grid.

Not just to conserve resources but also to encourage increased social interaction between residents, forcing them to bump into each other in various open-air atriums, gardens and greenhouses. The open design and emphasis on sustainable living has created a

distinctly hippy, communitarian vibe; the population of the town is mostly Soleri fanatics and bell-casting artisans.

### **3. Who were the proponents of archigram? What did they want from the society?**

ARCHIGRAM dominated the architectural avantgarde in the 1960s and early 1970s with its playful, pop-inspired visions of a technocratic future after its formation in 1961 by a group of young London architects.

Warren Chalk, Peter Cook, Dennis Crompton, David Greene, Ron Herron and Michael Webb were the key proponents of Archigram.

The name Archigram (Architecture+Telegram) was invented to describe a home-made magazine, the free-form was designed to explore new projects and new thinking which were overturning the strict modernist dictates of the 1960s.

They began to receive attention and were working together on exhibition projects so the name stuck with them as a group.

The projects which they created drew on the technologies of the 'Space Race', the dawn of the digital revolution, consumer boom, etc.

The projects included the famous

- Walking City,
- Plug-in City and
- Instant City,

which variously proposed the use of

- pods,
- capsules,
- mega structures,
- inflatable or temporary components,
- cars,
- furniture,

- clothes and
- gadgets

Their aim was to replace conventional building forms in other words, the inventive use of new technologies to rethink society and its forms of habitation.

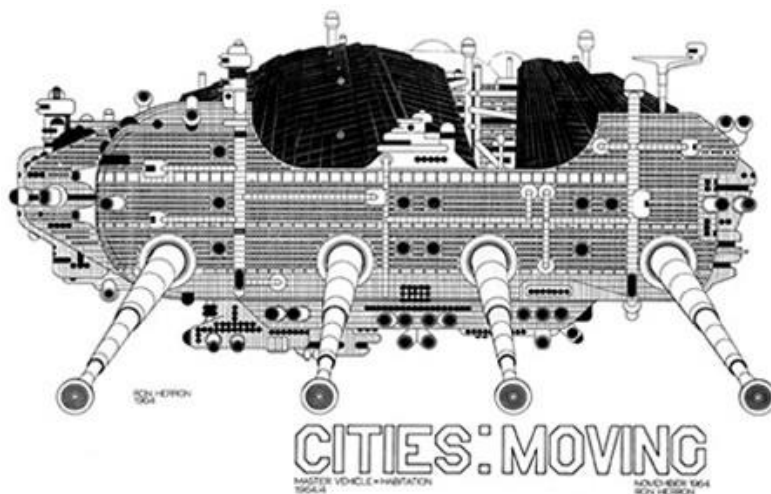
Archigram are amongst the most seminal, iconoclastic and influential architectural groups of the modern age.

They created some of the 20th century's most iconic images and projects, rethought the relationship of technology, society and architecture, predicted and envisioned the information revolution decades before it came to pass, and reinvented a whole mode of architectural education and therefore produced a seam of architectural thought with truly global impact.

#### **4. Explain few city projects by archigram with sketches.**

##### **The Walking City :**

The Walking City was an idea proposed by British architect Ron Herron in 1964.



In an article in avant-garde architecture journal Archigram, Ron Herron proposed building massive mobile robotic structures, with their own intelligence, that could freely roam the world, moving to wherever their

resources or manufacturing abilities were needed.

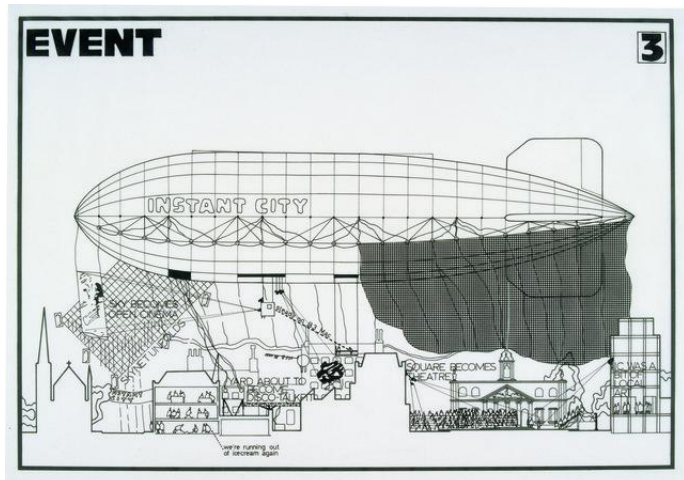
*"Walking city imagines a future in which borders and boundaries are abandoned in favor of a nomadic lifestyle among groups of people worldwide."*

One day, in the near future, a city like a walking city may be "realized as technology improves and advances. This means that technology that we have is influencing the architecture, in a broader sense, the whole world, at a vast amount.

And part of the technology may be Culture Technology using new kinds of mediums and modalities especially digital.

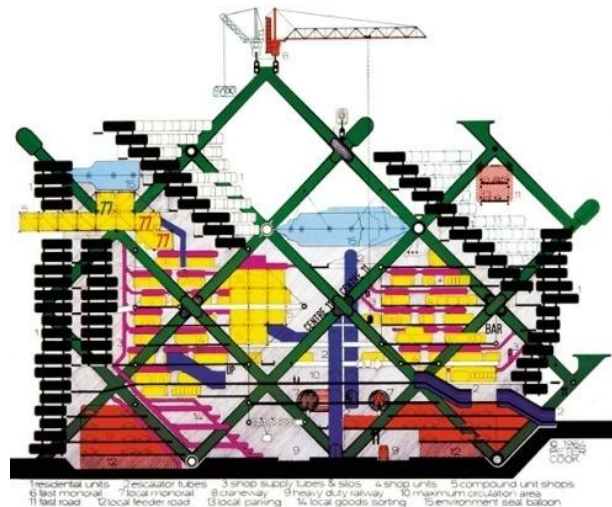
### **The instant city :**

"The instant city is an urban intervention in a rural town. A zeppelin floats into town, hooks into the center and bombards the town with art, events, temporary structures, media infrastructure such as billboards, projectors and screens, and other stimulations, then eventually drifts off after installing a wide range of communications infrastructure that hooks the town into the new urban network. The intention being intensive and deliberate cultural urbanization.



### **The Plug-in City:**

"The Plug-in City is set up by applying a large scale network-structure, containing access ways and essential services, to any terrain. Into this network are placed units which cater for all needs.



These units are planned for obsolescence. The units are served and maneuvered by means of cranes operating from a railway at the apex of the structure."