The Urban Block

FBC for Architects
Structure:
Blocks comprise Towns Neighborhoods & Villages
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block
Urban Form-Basics: Urban Renewal
Urban Form-Basics: Urban *Renewal*
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block

Structure:
inside & outside
public & private
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block – Outside/Public
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block – Inside/Private
Great Place Basics:
Diversity and Urban Form
Great Place Basics: Diversity and the Block
The Basics: Complementary Uses
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block – Change Uses Within
Great Place Basics:
Siting: Lot Coverage / Parking
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block

Structure:
Parcel
Inside & outside
Block Structure:
Siting: Private Open Space
Block Structure:
Siting: Private Open Space
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block – Outside & Inside

Multi-Family, Courtyard

The block interiors are spatially distinct; these are the private open space of the residents, for children and gardens. They are the lungs of the city.

The building plans work with this public/private duality, placing the more public rooms to the street side, and the private rooms, such as bedrooms, toward the private backyard and/or in the upper floors.
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block – Inside/Private
Urban Form-Basics: The Urban Block - Interior
A lesson from the tradition of Charleston, South Carolina, is useful here. The Charleston single-house, which is set “sideways to the street” in series, puts one side of the house broad against the neighbor’s property line (generally to the north). The tradition of north-side manners limits windows on this side to those necessary for light. The northern neighbor then retains the privacy of his/her side yard. Set in series (one side open, the other closed), these houses are able to open fully toward their side-yard gardens.
In-town dwellings must provide comfortable private open space (yard) and contribute to creating the public space of the street. These yards are not under scrutiny of the neighbors or from the street. This privacy allows the house to open to its gardens. Private life balances public life.
A City of Neighborhoods

A Hierarchy of Streets
Urban Form-Basics:
The Urban Neighborhood in the Town/City
Urban Form-Basics: Hierarchy of Streets (character/function)
Urban Form-Basics: Hierarchy of Streets (character/function)
Urban Form-Basics: Hierarchy of Streets
(character/function)
Observations explanatory of the Plan.

I. THE positions for the different Edifices, and for the several Squares or streets of different shapes, as they are laid down, were first determined on the spot, to avoid the most difficult and laborious process of laying them out in the field. In this respect, the plan has been far more practical than the most elaborate description of the same. Attention has been paid to the situation of the public buildings, such as the Capitol, the House of Representatives, and other public offices, as well as to the streets and squares, so as to allow for the most convenient arrangement.

II. LINES or streets of direct communication have been determined, to connect the separate and most distant parts of the city, and to facilitate through the whole a connectivity of streets at the same time. This plan has been laid out in the form of a square or rectangle, with streets and squares disposed in a regular manner.

III. Erected and extended, as the situation of the City indicates. Squares, streets, and public buildings have been so combined as to suit the site at certain given points with their thoroughfares, as to form the spaces first determined, in the squares or streets.

Scale of Poles.

Lat. Capitol. 38° 35' N.
Long. 0° 0'

In order to execute this plan, Mr. Ellicott drew a true horizontal line by selected observation, which passed through the three estimated for the Capitol, this line he divided by another line East and West, which passed through the same. These lines were accurately measured, and made the basis on which the whole plan was executed. He then all the lines by several instruments, and determined the points exactly by actual measurement, and left nothing to the uncertainty of the compass.
Names & Directions of 8 winds
Vitruvius identified