

Entrance Location

It's annoying to search around a public building, looking for the proper entrance.

1. Consciously or unconsciously, a person walking works out his path some distance ahead, so as to take the shortest path. (See Tyrus Porter, *A Study of Path Choosing Behavior, Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1964; in particular the study of the Kaiser Center Lobby.*)

When he is approaching a building, this means he must be able to see the entrance early. If the entrance is not visible, when the building itself becomes visible, he cannot

work out his path.

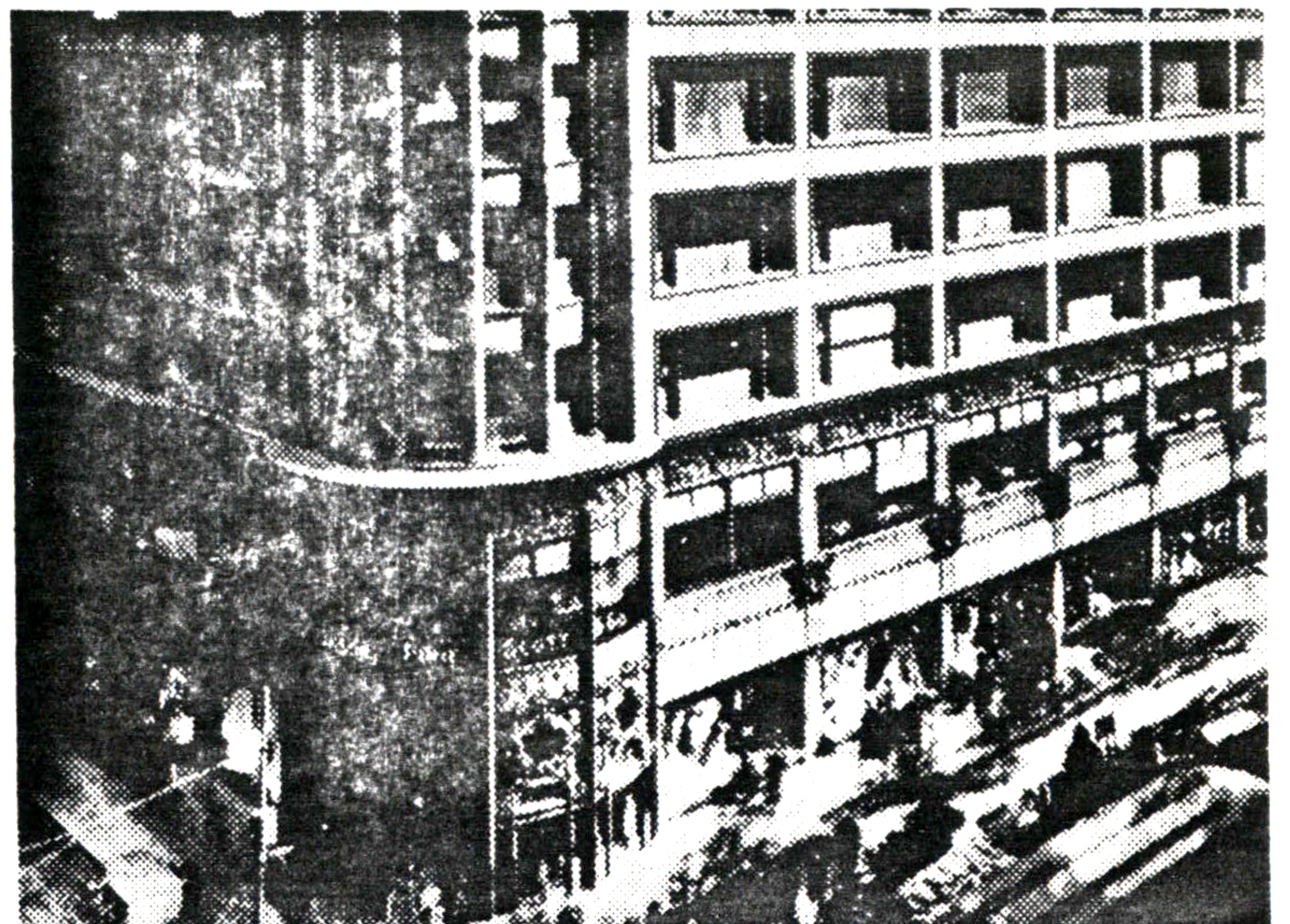
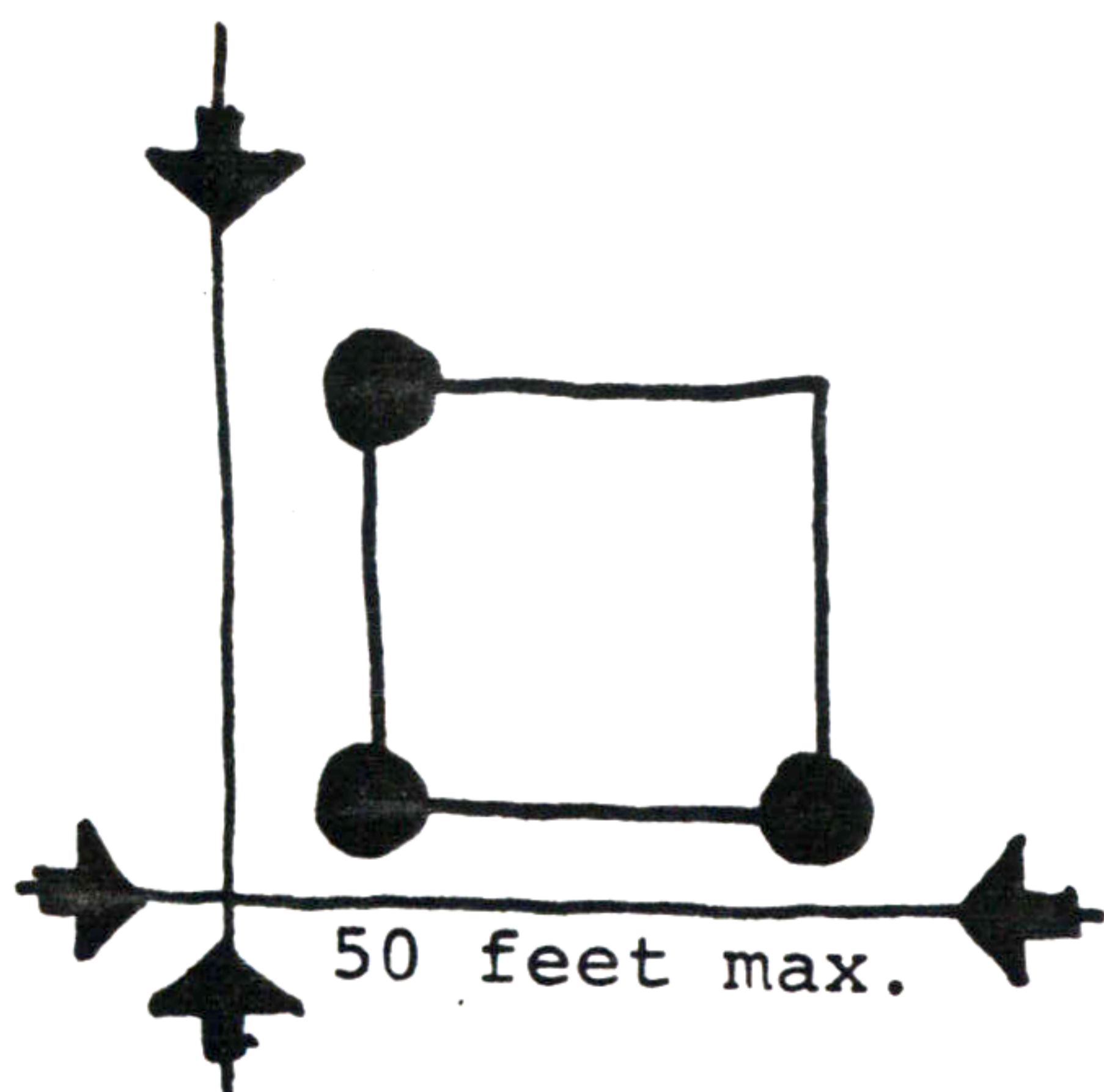
2. No one likes to back-track or to retrace his steps. If he has to walk along the building for some distance, before being able to enter, the chances are high that he will have to turn back after entering, and walk back in the direction he came from.

Furthermore, if he has to walk along the building for some time

before he can enter, it is not only annoying for him, but he may begin to wonder whether he is going the right way, and whether he hasn't perhaps missed the proper entrance. It is hard to pin this down numerically. For the moment, we have fixed on 50 feet to designate an order of magnitude. No one is bothered by walking along blind walls less than 50 feet long; if they get much longer, it begins to be annoying.

Therefore: Place the entrances in such a way as to satisfy the following two criteria.

- 1. From any approach to the building an entrance is visible as soon as the building itself becomes visible.*
- 2. Regardless of the direction of approach, the walk along the building is not more than about 50' before reaching an entrance.*



Entrance Location

By: Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein.

July 1968 revised June 1970

This pattern is tentative. If you have any evidence to support or refute its current formulation, please send it to the Center for Environmental Structure, P.O. Box 5156, Berkeley, California 94705; we will add your comments to the next edition.