# THE TIMELESS WAY OF BUILDING

Christopher Alexander

with love and thanks to Ingrid, Sara, and Peter

# NEW YORK OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

1979

### CONTENTS

#### THE TIMELESS WAY

1. The timeless way 3

# THE QUALITY

2. The quality without a name 19

3. Being alive 41

4. Patterns of events 55

5. Patterns of space 75

6. Patterns which are alive 101

7. The multiplicity of living patterns 123

8. The quality itself 137

# THE GATE

9. The flower and the seed 157

10. Our pattern languages 167

#### CONTENTS

- Our pattern languages (cont.) 193
  The creative power of language 211
  The breakdown of language 225
  Patterns which can be shared 243
  The reality of patterns 277
  The structure of a language 305
- 17. The evolution of a common language for a town 325

# THE WAY

The genetic power of language 351
 Differentiating space 365
 One pattern at a time 385
 Shaping one building 403
 Shaping a group of buildings 427
 The process of construction 455
 The process of repair 475
 The slow emergence of a town 493
 Its ageless character 511

#### THE KERNEL OF THE WAY

27. The kernel of the way 531