

RECREATIONAL POSSIBILITIES OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES IN PÁROVCE, NITRA

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Abstract

Short term recreation is closely connected with the public open spaces in the residential areas. The mental health and satisfaction of the people living in the housing estates are related to the amount and quality of the green open spaces. Quality or success of open spaces is recognised by: great accessibility, logical functional division according to the landscape architectural design, nice and useful equipment/playgrounds, several places to meet with neighbours and plenty possibilities to rest. Another important element for satisfaction is different type of greenery in good health conditions. The outdoor recreation is one of the key factor for development of the physical and mental health of the children, youth, people in productive age and seniors.

Keywords: housing estate, short term recreation, landscape architecture, adaptation to climate changes

Introduction

In the second half of the 20th century the principles of Athen Charter from 1933 were gradually applied in the reconstruction of war-damaged cities as well as in the construction of new urban districts throughout Europe (Moravčíková, 2012). The new Athens Charter (1998) is less dogmatic in its expression of societal desires than planning practices. It expresses trends and priorities in the development of the European Union. It states that open spaces, urban greenery and cultural landscapes are essential elements of urban policy, which must focus more on the creation of pleasant environments and green spaces in the city.

There is a need for a high visual quality of the environment, which is crucial in the perception of individual spaces. It determines the identity of the space, gives a sense of genius loci, creates continuity of environments. The interrelation between the quality of public spaces and the level of social relations is well known (Janto, 2023). Revitalization and establishment of green urban spaces contribute to the formation of local communities (Slobodníková, Tóth, 2022), they promote sustainable development and contribute to environmental improvement (Mariš, 2022). Active local leaders, the support of local government, non-profit as well as business organizations are important in the creation of communities (Marišová et al., 2023).

One of the effective means to improve the quality of public spaces of residential complexes is the application of green infrastructure (GI) and design strategies (Tóth, 2022) and their integration into current landscape-architectural approaches and planning (Fornal-Pienak and Bihuňová, 2022). GI is also referred as part of the concept of the fourth nature (Čibík, Back Prochnov et al., 2020), which can offer a wide range of ecosystem services (Schneider et al., 2020), such as mitigating the negative impacts of climate change (Hus et al., 2021), recreational services (Šinka et al., 2019, Bechera et al., 2022) and enhancing the overall environmental quality of life and well-being (Bihuňová et al., 2021). In addition, the application of GI can support the sustainable development of unused and/or abandoned urban landscapes (Back Prochnov and Čibík, 2022). When designing GI, it is important to consider the interrelationships between people, spaces and current technologies (Čakovská et al., 2019). The quality of housing has major implications for people's health (WHO, 2018). It is also important to put into practice practices resulting from new legislation (Marišová and Lichnerová, 2021) and to apply cooperation between local and state government (Marišová et al. 2023).

Responding to climate change is to increase the resilience of settlements to their impacts, with the help of implementing a balanced range of adaptation and mitigation measures. This will also reduce the carbon footprint, improve the life quality of residents, promoting biodiversity, increase health protection, as well as reduce the financial costs of managing and maintaining the borough's assets and residents (Stano et al., 2020).

Materials and methods

Nitra is one of the oldest Slovak cities. The socialist and dynamic reconstruction of the city between 1950 and 1970 changed Nitra, especially Lower Town (which includes the Párovce housing estate –

once important district of the city with a large Jewish community). Many buildings of the old town from 18th and 19th centuries, were demolished due to new residential development (Vnuk, 2020).

New Párovce district was built in the 60's of the 20. century. Together with Predmostie, belongs to the one of the oldest housing estates in Nitra. It has 27 hectares and is directly connected to the central zone of the town. The main concept of the housing estate was designed by architect Michal Maximilián Scheer in cooperation with Gabriel Strážovec, Štefan Sojko and others. The design and construction of the residential district with 2,300 flats and social equipment was built up between 1956 and 1963 (Dulla and Moravčíková, 2002).

The city's conditions at that time specified the construction of a maximum of five-storey apartment buildings with a maximum repeatability of the buildings. The axis is formed by the wide Štúrova street, with residential apartments, which are combined with shops, services and administration. Two types of houses are most frequently repeated - the high-rise apartment buildings with a concave curved roof and the longitudinal section house (Vnuk, 2020).

During the Design Studio: Green Infrastructure Planning, a group of 18 students were tasked to create the landscape-architectural proposal for new functions and greenery development, including solutions for adaptation to climate changes. The terrain survey and inventory of the greenery were done during September and October 2023, followed by work in the atelier: preparing analyses, studying the literature sources, working on the different concept designs and elaborating original landscape – architectural design of the chosen area with the aim to revitalize the open green spaces, develop the greenery elements, support the safety and comfort of the space, while preserving the character and historical value of the area.

Results

First group of the students have changed the open green spaces in a very significant way. The central part of the area is dedicated to the park with several terrain modelation, including the parking house, which is part of the park and the roof is accessible by the walkway and the lift. On the top is caffee-bar and rest zone. The façade of the parking house is cover by climbing plants. There have been added several children playground, sport zone and quiet zone for the seniors with the pergolas, resting zone and community garden. The biodiversity was support by zones with the intensive lawn, perennial beds and flower meadows.



Fig. 1: Landscape architectural proposal of the central park (Author: Briš, T., Mikovcová, A., Ravasová, T., 2023)

The second chosen segment of Párovce district is an area with the small 4 flats apartments, where is greater potential for community life. The landscape architectural proposal of this segment is aimed at small scale design, where community gardens belong to each family. Current children playground will be extended and small coffee house will be placed by it. The proposal count with the permeable pavement, collecting the rain water from the roofs, new tree plantation and big amount of the flower beds. The street line is supported by small benches, which create visual barrier to semi private areas. At the place of the current parking plot will be underground parking garage with green roof.



Fig. 2: Landscape architectural proposal of the open green spaces (Author: Vedmidska, A., Vavrová, L., Havrila, T., 2023)

Discussion

Nitra city has enough green space per 1 inhabitant (approx. 140 m² /inhabitant). Some districts, in which mass housing prevails, are relatively unfavourable in terms of the amount of green areas and the amount of green areas for a given number of inhabitants is insufficient. The greatest positives of Scheer's architectural design is considered use of the natural features of the terrain, the favourable transition between the continuous development of the town and its edge, created by the rhythmic sequence of buildings. The urban composition and architectural expression of the houses classifies the housing estate as a typical example of late modernism (Dulla, Moravčíková, 2002).

The Paper presents landscape architectural proposals of Párovce district in Nitra city, where are different types of apartment buildings with various quality of open public spaces. Proposals, which were elaborated consider the quality of the area and support green infrastructure, biodiversity, community interaction and creates places for everyday short term recreation.

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Souhrn

Krátkodobá rekreace je úzce spojená s veřejnými prostranstvími v obytných oblastech. Duševní zdraví a spokojenost obyvatel sídlišť souvisí s množstvím a kvalitou volné zeleně. Kvalita či úspěšnost otevřených prostranství se pozná podle: skvělé dostupnosti, logického funkčního členění podle

krajinářsko-architektonického řešení, pěkného a užitečného vybavení/hřišť, několika míst k setkávání se sousedy a dostatku možností k odpočinku. Dalším důležitým prvkem spokojenosti je různý typ zeleně v dobrých zdravotních podmínkách. Rekreační v přírodě je jedním z klíčových faktorů pro rozvoj fyzického a duševního zdraví dětí, mládeže, lidí v produktivním věku a seniorů.

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