

Chapter 13

Urban Green Spaces for Sustainable Community Development: A Strategic Management Approach

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to analyze the strategic management innovation in sustainable management of urban green spaces for neighborhood and community development. The report is intended to review the available theoretical and empirical literature on urban green spaces in the main related topics of community and neighborhood development, sustainable management, and strategic management innovation. The research methods employed are the analytical from a functionalist approach moving later into the critical analysis and finally from a holistic or integrative point of view. Finally, this chapter adopts a provocative and prescriptive strategic management approach of urban green spaces by presenting some research gaps and suggesting future research.

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning God created the earth, God made the earth to be garden like home for mankind; he pronounced all the work to be good cultivated and to take care of it. Some important topics of urban green spaces to take into account are the sustainable management, maintenance, community commitment, enhancement and involvement, participative culture, spatial planning with green objectives.

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The term green space has its origins in the green space planning and in the urban conservation movements to describe the green environment of urban areas. Urban green space is considered a long-term comprehensive tool for protection and maintenance of environmental sustainability by providing ecosystem services to users. Urban green space is based on the protection and optimization of natural ecological system as the base of the ecological balance of the city, its communities and neighborhoods. Urban green space is defined as land of unsealed and permeable, 'soft' surfaces such as soil, grass, shrubs and trees as the predominant character publicly accessible and managed.

An open space is "a mixture of civic spaces and green spaces" (Chesterton and Pedestrian Market Research Services Ltd 1997) encompassing "a mixture of public (or civic) and green space, where public spaces are mainly 'hard' spaces such as squares, street frontages and paved areas." Research Report for the Scottish Executive Central Research Unit 2001). Therefore, public open space is an open space, both green spaces and hard civic spaces with public access. Public open space may not have recreational facilities (Ilam, 1999). Urban green spaces refer to land uses and land covered with natural or man-made vegetation in the city and planning areas.

Green space is any form of natural urban forests, semi-natural environments with plant species (Bowler, Buyung-Ali, Knight, & Pullin, 2010). Urban green space embraces all types of parks, green spaces, play areas intended for recreational uses. The nature of urban green spaces is determined by some relevant factors such as quantity in the urban area, activities, experiences, and perceived benefits to the users, (Oguz, 2000; Herzele & Wiedeman, 2003) location and accessibility or distribution (Grahn & Stigsdotter, 2003; Neuvonen, Sievanen, Susan, & Terhi, 2007).

This paper aims to review the strategic management innovation of urban green spaces for sustainable community development. In doing so, this paper begins with a functional analysis of urban green spaces by reviewing the main functions and deriving a typology. An analysis of benefits of urban green spaces is conducted to understand the relationship and association with the quality of lifestyle by providing a linkage between nature and the social and economics of people living in the community. Later, the analysis leads to review the sustainable management of community development and the association with the strategic management innovation as an approach to improve the quality of life of users. Finally, this analysis leads to present some research gaps and suggests some future research in this field.

TYOLOGY OF GREEN SPACES

Biodiversity in urban spaces varies among the different types of city green space projects, an aspect to consider since it is the first action to take for the design, such as the diversity, biotope, creation, species of plants, running water, etc. Thus, it is important to investigate if the different types of urban green spaces meet the needs and expectations of users, the social, economic and environmental contributions and benefits, barriers and encouraging factors to use them, in such a way that a typology of users can be developed. Resourcing urban green space management is more than an increase in funding to become a creative and innovative orientation of available resources, the associated costs, partnerships, and comparing the spending between the different types.

The structure of a typology may vary among categories and types, such as formal and informal open space, outdoor recreational parks, amenity areas and allotments, gardens and green squares, children's play, public parks, forest park, heritage historical and archaeological parks, nature conservation parks, district, community and neighborhood parks, street green, cemeteries, greenbelts, green networks. A

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