

A Study on the Current Challenges Hindering Urban Park Development in Ulaanbaatar City, Mongolia

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Abstract : Urban parks are important assets to every community in terms of providing space for health, cultural and leisure activities. However, Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia, faces a shortage of green spaces, particularly urban parks, due to overpopulation and haphazard growth. Therefore, in order to increase green space per person, the city government has planned to increase green space per person up to 20m² by 2020 and 30m² by 2030 by establishing more urban parks throughout the city. But this plan was estimated that it is highly unlikely to reach those goals according to the analysis of the present status of plan implementation because the current amount of green space per person is still 4m². In the past studies globally, city planners and scientists agree that it is highly improbable to develop urban parks and keep maintenance sustainably without reflecting community perceptions and their involvement in the park establishment. Therefore, this research aims to find the challenges which stymie urban park development in Ulaanbaatar city and recommend dealing with the problems. In order to reach the goal, communities' perceptions about the current challenges and their necessity for urban parks were identified and determined whether they differentiated depending on two different types of residential areas (urban and suburban areas). It also attempted to investigate international good practices on how they deal with similar problems. The research methodology was based on a questionnaire survey among city residents, a document review regarding the involvement of stakeholders, and a literature review of relevant past studies. According to the residents' perceptions, the biggest challenge was a lack of land availability and followed by a lack of proper policy, planning, management, and maintenance out of seven key challenges identified. The biggest community demand from the urban park was a playground for children and followed by recreation and relaxation out of six types of needs. Based on research findings, the study proposed several recommendations for enhancements as institutional and legal framework, park plan and management, supportive environment and monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

Keywords : challenges of urban park planning and maintenance, community-based urban park establishment, community perceptions and participation, urban parks in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

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