

combined population of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Baltimore.

Open space planning can actually be divided into two categories: 1) those areas dealing with the wild lands of our country such as are now administered by the National Park System, U. S. Forest System, and Bureau of Land Management, and 2) the lands that occur in pockets and corridors abandoned or bypassed by urbanization. In this paper I will deal mainly with urban open space planning.

Historic Overview

Urban parks and open spaces have a long history in this country. The actual development of them primarily took place, however, in

years ago The National Park Service attempted to convince the major cities and towns of this country to increase the open space and recreational facilities within and surrounding these urban areas. In other words create new and revitalized urban parks and open space systems to satisfy the recreation demands of urban dwellers. This plea was largely founded on the increased strain of overuse the national parks and forests were feeling. Statistics show that in the past decade the total park area increased from more than 26 million acres to about 30 million. This increase, however, becomes insignificant compared to the visitor usage which jumped 150 percent from more than 72 million to almost 180 million.

There is some abatement in the form of gasoline shortages which will no doubt restrict the amount of personal automobile pleasure driving for any great distances. This may mean a reduction in terms of impact at the national park level but more realistically means a shift in usage, and demand, to local and state recreation areas. This change of recreation use could greatly increase mental stress of urban dwellers. Both because of lack of mobility to get to parks and recreation areas and the increased contact with masses of people.

Yet another second-order crisis appearing on the horizon linked with the lack of open space recreation areas at the local level and immobility is that of an increase in BTU and kilowatt hour usage. With the steady increase in leisure time more people will potentially be spending many more hours at home. This then could have a significant influence in terms of increased energy consumption to run air conditioners, television sets and radios, home cooking, water use, lighting, as well as various outdoor tools and equipment. Many of our major cities have already been experiencing for years electrical power shortages during the summer months.

Social and Physical Integration

Urban open space today cannot be thought of as a land use separate from other activities within the city. There must become a conscious effort to integrate open space and park development with patterns of urban movement, air rights, and areas for living, shopping and working. Social and physical planning

Our cities are entering a new era of conflict that has the potential of being the crescendo of several major environmental crises. One issue, air and water quality, has and will be of principal concern whereas another

Urban Space Planning Room for Recreation

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will gain attention dealing with the mental health of the urban dweller. The demand for more open spaces in and surrounding our cities has risen sharply in the last few years. This has come about because of the increasing need for energy conservation placing restrictions on the freedom of individuals and families to travel by personal automobile. There is every indication that this demand will not slacken.

Cities are becoming larger, in many cases against the wishes of the government and the pressures of the strongest governmental actions that can be brought to bear against them. A great many people are distressed by this trend and believe that it will ultimately crush us all in a mass of people, concrete, traffic, and polluted air. A somewhat smaller, but growing group is worried about what it will do to man's mental health and sense of personal identity. By the year 2000 more than 80% of the increase in our population will live in urban areas. Within the next 15 years 30 million people will be added to our cities. This additional population is equal to the

the 19th century. There have been too many long periods of time within this century in which we almost stopped building parks. Two world wars and two lesser ones, a devastating depression and a post-war economic and development boom have resulted in over half the present population of this country being born in an era when parks and open spaces were scarcely being thought of. Historically, it is worth noting that while open space and park activities for the growing urban population were falling behind, an almost equally remarkable open space acquisition was taking place. The American conservation movement was making far-sighted advances in its success of setting aside large areas of land for a great system of national parks — mostly in the western part of the U. S. but now a growing number in the East. But to this day this land ethic has never been translated into the urban community. Our planning processes simply do not yet recognize the geographics of cities and neighborhoods, of parks and open spaces.

Approximately three to four

must become a single process.

Historically, open space has been thought of as wilderness or parks, playgrounds and roadside areas. This definition, however, must be changed to one that is more flexible with the direction being toward an open space that is adaptable to a multitude of uses (Central Park in New York City or Golden Gate Park in San Francisco).

There has been a recent rebirth of the value of linear open space. These areas, or linkages, can be multi-purpose in the sense of offering not only easy and safe corridors from park to park or home to school and shopping but also sitting areas, small play lots, fishing, birdwatching, bicycling, bridle paths, etc. The land that could comprise this form of open space might be canals, stream beds, flood plains, old rights-of-way, trails, and little-used secondary roads. When aggregated, it can become rather sizable in acreage and offer a very diversified set of recreation activities within easy access of urban dwellers.

We see several parks, large and small, in cities today and they stand out on a city map as green emeralds in an otherwise patchwork of land use colors. They are isolated except for the immediate neighborhood around the park. Access is almost solely by automobile or mass transportation, when it exists, for those people in other sections of the city. By developing a linear open space system threading throughout the city by the means mentioned above, accessibility could be offered to the entire city along with the side benefits gained from many uses occurring along the corridor system itself.

People to the Parks

One of the primary words in

physical planning of our cities is mobility. The Secretary of the Interior has been studying efforts to locate state and regional parks and open spaces closer to the major urban centers. This is being done in conjunction with state and locally subsidized mass transportation systems to increase accessibility of parks and open spaces outside our cities to low income — mostly immobile — central city families. The State of Utah, like most states, has recently passed legislation offering the opportunity to increase sales tax to help finance this type of state-wide transportation system.

There should be an immediate program of action initiated and the first step should be the establishment of a broadly expanded and accelerated open space acquisition program. Through effective planning processes the acquisition of open space must be related to patterns of urbanization. The need is for open space to occur where high concentrations of people are; land which is accessible physically, psychologically, and socially.

The old fashioned concept that parks could not be provided for in our densely built-up cities because of lack of land is simply not true. A study of the ten largest cities in the country revealed that, on the average, 20% of the city is undeveloped and uncommitted land. Some open space strategies, along with this statistic, being promoted recently are concerning the reclamation of valuable natural tracts of land which exist within or near urban areas for public use. These would include river fronts, harbors, old military installations, and other types of federal lands. Other newly found areas involve air rights above already existing land uses such a sewage treat-

ment plants, downtown expressways, roof tops, etc.; closure of little used streets; conversion of cemeteries to memorial parks.

Central Park, Golden Gate Park, Boston Commons, Chicago's lake front are among the legacies of open space bequeathed to today's generation by the foresight of late 19th century planners such as Burnham, Olmsted, Cleveland and Jensen. Let us hope that the next few generations can have the same chance to have such open space systems in existence to enjoy.

"That these wild lands shall live and bloom for 10,000 years to come, is our dedication to human culture and our legacy to our children, so that they, on a warm spring day, can feel peace in a sea of grass, watch a bee visit a shooting star, hear a sand-piper call in the sky, and understand the incomprehensible symphony of life."

Dr. Hugh Iltis

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