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City Parks and Open Air Spaces - Urban Design Considerations

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Presenter: William L. Walker, AIA, Core Consulting Group

Credits*: AIA, AICP, CPE, ENG ▶

🕒 90 min, 1 pm ET 📅 December 16

Course Description

Learn how to apply Kevin Lynch's urban design considerations to city park design.

Most programs for development of parks contain quantitative criteria and goals, such as how many acres and what equipment to provide. A typical park planning process will evaluate alternative sites, land and construction costs, demographics, operating costs, staffing, etc. These are all meaningful factors which are necessary and are often taught in colleges and universities. This topic is intended to go beyond those considerations, by applying Perceptual and Experiential Urban Design considerations derived from the well-respected author Kevin Lynch. Design for the citizen's experience is often an overlooked consideration. Lynch provided a set of tools by which designers can consider the way people perceive the urban environment, and use those tools to create built places where people can move easily and safely through familiar and new places. One where people can navigate to and from their places of residence to and through the parks and open places. Visible landmarks can be designed to be used in connecting pedestrians with their intended destinations, and at the same time creating a network of objects for easy reference in navigating familiar and foreign places alike. With well-designed pathways, pedestrians can choose from several ways to reach places of interest. The edges of those paths can offer shade, shelter and entertainment. Where paths meet, nodal points can provide places for rest and reflection- places to meet others or to be alone. Connecting people to their waterways, civic places, libraries, museums can be used to reinforce sense of community

and unique neighborhoods with their roots.

By applying many of Lynch's sensory considerations with interesting visual creations, even the smallest pocket parks can offer stimulation and delight to people of all ages and from all backgrounds. In addition, it offers a means by which the largest parks and urban spaces can be ordered into a navigable combination of different but related parts.

Learning Objectives

- You will be able to define a range of criteria that can be used to evaluate existing places, or to plan.
- You will be able to recognize the relative importance of many of the factors that contribute to form the human experience.
- You will be able to discuss what design features have led to the development of some of the most memorable park-like places for public use.
- You will be able to explain why some parks are memorable and easy to experience, while others are not.

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