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# The Greenways in Athens

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**Georgi J. (2013) The Greenways in Athens**

- Las tendencias y modas que influían en las composiciones de formas, volúmenes y cromatismos.
- Los aspectos simbólicos presentes en los jardines del momento.

La aplicación de estas recomendaciones contribuye de manera decisiva a que la intervención restauradora en un jardín histórico lleve a que éste pueda ser percibido por el visitante con un sentido más riguroso del realismo y de la puridad estilística en el momento histórico de la creación o del máximo esplendor del jardín y de su interpretación a través del tiempo.

### THE GREENWAYS IN ATHENS

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Greenways are corridors of undeveloped land in a city setting. They include vegetation belts, creeks, rivers, floodplains and other natural features along public infrastructures. Public infrastructures consist of utility networks, roadways, rail corridors and other constructs that facilitate public usage of green space (Flink and Searns, 1993; Little, 1990, Georgi and Sarikou, 2006).

Greenways are increasingly recognized as an integral part of these infrastructures.

Greenways augment infrastructures as well as they enhance citizen's mobility by enabling more pedestrian and bicycle safe areas. They provide linkages between neighbourhoods and existing parks adding venues for community networking and recreational opportunities.

Greenways enhance scenic views, increase awareness of historical areas, and protect ecologically sensitive areas within the city setting where they exist (Little, 1990). These networks also facilitate urban infrastructure redevelopment, such as abandoned railways and roads (Marcus and Francis, 1998).

The root of the greenway goes back to Frederick L. Olmsted's "park way" in America and Ebenezer Howard's "garden city" terms in Europe. (Fábos and Ahern, 1996).

Ecological benefits of greenways range from protecting biological diversity of species to abiotic benefits.

By fostering connectivity, genetic stagnation is alleviated through reduction of island population and the resulting inbreeding (Little, 1990; Noss, 1987, Georgi and Dimitriou, 2010). Greenways benefit other ecological processes by helping sustain water quality, abate pollution, deter soil erosion and facilitate the exchange of energy and nutrients within the system (Jongman, 2003; Noss, 1987, Georgi and Zafiriadis, 2006).



*The major green areas in Athens*

Establishment of greenways at the local level is considered to be one of the most important steps toward creating a foundation of larger ecological networks and is the focus of this research (Jongman, 2003).

The emphasis of the study is to analyze current practices of local jurisdictions in the planning and acquisition of greenways so as for this purpose, the City of Athens, Greece, was chosen as the study site. Athens has been an attractive city for ages.

Its natural and historical features give opportunity for people to live the city and city history. And now in modern world Athens is a high populated city where lots tourist attractions at the same time because of its historical and cultural structure. So, greenways can be an alternative pedestrian transportation paths and public spaces where people use for recreation.

An addition to these, greenways serve as a educational paths which gives historical and cultural information for city inhabitants walking in the street. Athens is a desirable study site for three reasons.



*The Greenlink Project in Zografou, Athens*

It has quite large green areas such green hills (e.g. Acropolis, Lycabettus, Arditos), medium size parks as (e.g. National Gardens, Zappeion, Pedion Areos) large open areas (Elliniki old airport), large parks (e.g. Environmental Awareness Park of Antonis Tritsis, Goudi Park), and has begun acquiring land for greenways through the well-known project of Unification Archaeological Areas.



Integration of greenways into the Unification Archaeological Areas has enhance the ecological integrity of greenways within the city's development planning. Therefore currently the city is acquiring land for greenways in an ad hoc way.

This study assessed urban development patterns relating to future growth and their impacts on proposed greenways. The study helps to improve planning and implementation of greenways in city settings in general and for Athens.

The main environmental problem from the sites that were chosen is the lack of green or open spaces in the city and the difficult access to the suburban green spaces.

Furthermore according to the Greenlink project have been proposed to the Municipality of Zografou the Greenways Network Linking System where have been proposed the linkage of the major campuses of Athens University and the National Technical University (collectively called "University Town"), the Ilissos park which is located on the south border of the municipality, the Goudi Park which is located at the North east of the Municipality and North of the National Technical University and Hymettus Mountain which stands in the southern part of the Municipality.

Lastly in order to link Goudi Park with Ilissos park a new pedestrian 'ramble' rout have been proposed at a main road named Ulof Palme.

The aim of this design is to use the area by pedestrians, bicyclist and motorists and the one use to compete without compete the other.



*The transformation of Ulof Palme road to Rambler.*

With the current study it is proposed a new greenway at the western park of Athens in order to link the Environmental Awareness Park which is s Egaleo mount in order to insert the biodiversity from Egaleo mount and the park to the western degraded part of Athens.

The physical environment of environmental Awareness Park Antonis Tritsis offers excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation.

It is situated on the west part of City of Athens.

It also supports attractive forest vegetation, which includes many large live pine trees, cypresses, eucalyptus and olive trees and the vegetation more dominated by drought resistant plants. Although the summers are hot and dry, even during that season there are many days or at least parts of days, in which outdoor activities can take place comfortably.

During the long falls and springs the weather usually is ideal to be outdoors, and even in the winter on most days the weather is conducive for hiking, biking, and other outdoor activities.

With a legislative appropriation for the initial purchase of the abandoned railway, it is planned to be created the first stretch of bike-drazines of 4 km which will expect to attract many bike enthusiasts, who enjoy the challenge of its rough

base while enjoying the scenery of the forested area through which it passes.



*The 2 proposal of linking parts of the City of Athens with Urban and Periurban Parks*

A Lake network Greenway system is located in the pa, also mentioned in the introduction, is adjacent with 5 lakes with totally 105 different aquatic species of birds.

Nonetheless, the survey of the visitors of the park, will more accurately ascertain the degree of enthusiasm for future development of its trails and greenways.

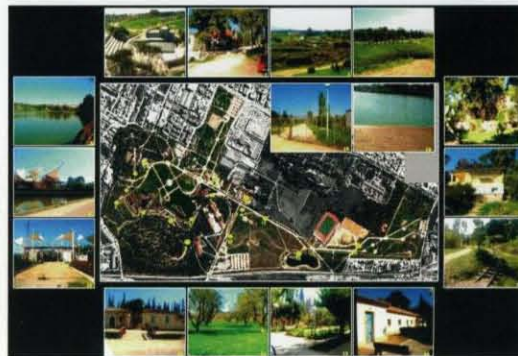
Although the City of Athens has lost all of the areas designated for greenways in the core portion of the city lying between the west to the east and to the south to fragmentation and development, it can still preserve a large portion of the overall greenways plan by acquiring land ahead of development pressure. This could be accomplished by the methods outlined by Rob Jongman to restore connectivity of greenways (2003).

With this recommendation, the city would also need to place priority on obtaining greenways in a more systematic manner to account for potential development pressure.

Adhering to such a plan would cease the fragmented nature of their acquisitions thus far and ensure a more connected and healthy greenway system.

Further research is still needed to explore how to implement a greenways program on a more regional and state-wide basis to ensure the preservation of the landscape as a whole.

This is particularly difficult since there are few large scale areas set aside within Athens to study and implement such a program.



*Environmental Awareness Park of Antonis Tritsis and the several uses*