
Transformation of Public Spaces in the Context of the Development of the Urban Environment

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Abstract: The article deals with the formation and transformation of public spaces as integral elements in the structure of urban fabrics as well, city life. Today, public space is gradually losing its characteristics; it is becoming inefficient, without any quality or comfort aspect. Therefore, one of the leading directions in the urban development of a modern city is retraining (transformation) public spaces in terms of their social, functional, environmental components.

Keywords: urban environment, public space, transformation, city, comfort.

Public spaces are the main elements of the urban environment, as well as the aesthetic aspect of the city. Urban development environment is impossible without "efficient" and "viable" public spaces. Urban space environment promotes development social relations, being an element of social cohesion and core of social life. The role of public space lies in "promoting a broad and creative interaction of people, the formation and development of both an individual person and a healthy civil society as a whole".

Today, the most relevant for urban planners, urbanists, sociologists are the issues of formation and transformation environment of public spaces - fragments of the urban environment, which have an important urban status and are designed for interaction and recreation of citizens and guests of the city. Urban space environment significantly affects how this space is perceived and used by different population groups. "Watching people's behavior in the city, it is quite easy to determine which spaces give an opportunity for a person to feel comfortable in a street environment and even enjoy it".

The concept of "public space" appeared not so long ago and, as yet, not enshrined in law. "To public spaces include territories that are functionally, socially, politically and economically significant for the city, identified with the help of buildings, landscape, various structures that perform city-forming functions that contribute to the improvement and maintenance of the sanitary and hygienic regime (insolation) and are objects of the formation of the historical, cultural, artistic and emotional climate of urban areas". Public spaces can perform different functions, among which the main ones can be distinguished: recreational (walks, relaxation); entertainment (concerts, festivals, film screenings); educational (cultural and creative events); communicative (meeting place, interaction of people); sports (grounds and territories for sports and games).

Despite the high importance of public urban spaces, their potential in many cities is not fully realized and does not meet the real needs of different segments of the population, they are not connected into a single urban scenario and route. In the end it feels discomfort and decrease in urban planning and social efficiency territories. Public space is gradually losing its characteristics, becoming inefficient, without any quality or comfortable aspect. "Lots built

up at the same time, as a rule, change little physically, and the little changes that take place are changes for the worse: gradual deterioration, separate seedy, random new uses here and there”.

The evolution of the city, its rhythms, the transformation of territories significantly limit the concept of public space to fundamentally functional approach and raise the issue of requalification (transformation) of public spaces in terms of their functional value. But, the problems do not end only with the elimination of the consequences of urbanization and motorization, transformation refers to the process interference in space, functional reconstruction, improvement comfort and ecology, attracting residents and applying various approaches in the formation of public space. This transformation should also touch on public spaces in the city center, where now they are increasingly monopolized by commercial activities with high cost, franchise stores, shopping and entertainment complexes and fast food. In addition to being central points of commercial and tourism activity, it is necessary to think about the quality of these spaces, which should be available for all "users" without exception: for parents with a stroller, children, people with limited mobility, the elderly, that is, to provide “easy” access for all and adaptation to everyone. “When working on a public space, it is necessary to proceed from an understanding of how citizens can use it, and then think through the details”.

But how to define a quality public space that meets the common interests in functional, social and spatial dimensions? This task goes beyond the urban and landscape approach, spatial quality is determined not only by street furniture and green spaces, but also by the consistency between the functional and social characteristics of these spaces, on the one hand, and spatial characteristics, on the other hand. Therefore, a one-sided approach to the formation of public spaces is no longer so effective. Kevin Lynch, theorist and practitioner of urban planning, in his works emphasizes the need to strive for quality improvement environment to enhance the sense of harmony and comfort. Moreover, it is necessary to improve this quality, focusing on users, citizens, and do this on the basis of studying existing perception of urban space. “Properly designed and managed public space is a major benefit to the functioning of a city and has a positive impact on its economy, environment, safety, health, integration and interoperability”.

When forming and transforming public spaces, several important points should be taken into account, which will allow laying the right foundation for the further development and transformation of urban areas.

1. Mandatory inclusion of vegetation in public spaces, green spaces should be diverse, creating bioclimatic comfort. The contribution of nature in urban areas is sufficient multifaceted. From an ecological point of view, it contributes to biodiversity, has a filtering effect on pollutant particles substances and improves air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide. Plants act as a microclimatic regulator, weakening the thermal effect of the city. From a social point of view, natural green spaces meet a common need residents in the recreation area. Research also shows that their influence on satisfaction with housing contributes to strengthening the sense of belonging of citizens to their everyday territories. “In modern concepts of the transformation of urban open spaces, an increase in the proportion of nature in their structure is increasingly acting as dominant”.

Recreating the ecological balance between nature and the city, return of lost green territories, inclusion of a green framework into a citywide structure, contribute to the formation of a quality, comfortable and "healthy" urban environment and is one of the main priorities in the formation and transformation of public spaces. It is also important to control the impact on the environment (energy efficient buildings, purification and use of rainwater, waste sorting

and recycling system, use of environmentally friendly technologies).

2. The transformation of public spaces is impossible without a qualitative improvement of the engineering infrastructure that ensures the effective functioning of public spaces in accordance with modern technical and technological requirements. Particular attention should be paid to solving transport problems, the possibility of choosing modes of transportation, organizing traffic for pedestrians and cyclists. "The city should offer residents shortcuts, attractive public spaces, and urban diversity functions".

3. When forming public urban spaces, should take into account the possibility of further development of such territories, the interaction of open and closed spaces, climate adaptation, the possibility of their rapid transformation using modern mobile equipment, which provides variability in the use of public space depending on the time of year. With the help of small architectural forms, it is possible to diversify the environment of public spaces, to designate the identity of the area of a certain area and territory, to highlight specific functional areas and provide navigation. Urban areas should include elements of creating a barrier-free environment for the movement of people with limited mobility population groups.

4. Another aspect of public spaces is the light in the city. Lighting is considered an important component of public spaces, it goes beyond functional and decorative use and becomes part of a holistic urban context, improving the quality of life of citizens. If earlier lighting performed only the function of street safety, today, with the development of the city and the increase in the number of luminous windows and points, the preservation of the identity of the city at night should appear. "Unlike daylight, in the dark, not all spaces and objects are highlighted, but only functionally used or compositionally necessary fragments". Developed concepts and lighting projects should be aimed at planning urban lighting on a global scale, taking into account the context of the place, so that it is not homogeneous, but at the same time creates a nightly unity of the city.

5. A "successful" public space is not only the formation and transformation, but also the management and use of such territories. The planning, development of territories and the adoption of new decisions should include residents of a particular area of the city, which gives ability to meet their needs and expectations.

Thus, public spaces, as the main forming elements, allow the city to show its identity, they reveal its cultural potential to the maximum and become the "face" of the city.

Summing up, we can say that the transformation of public spaces aimed at creating a high-quality urban environment, directly depends not only on the functional content, but also on improvement of the ecological state, taking into account the interests of "users" these spaces, creating conditions for a comfortable and healthy lifestyle life. The use of various approaches in the formation of public spaces should become the basis of urban development and one of the main resources for the development of a modern city.

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