

SKOPJE GREENING MASTER PLAN - GROWING EQUITY IN CITY GREEN SPACE

“It is of utmost importance that all city residents have the same access and benefits of green space. Addressing these inequities requires community engagement at every stage from planning through development to management.”



INTRODUCTION

Wouldn't you feel energized if you could walk to work along a tree-lined path, enjoying the occasional sunshine which filters through the green crown? Wouldn't you feel refreshed after a tiring workday, sitting by a flower bed with colorful blossoms scenting the air? To many, these experiences are a luxury that money cannot buy. But since the last year things are beginning to change. Recognizing the public's aspirations for a greener, lush environment, the Mayor of the City of Skopje started to develop and implement Greening Master Plans for urban areas. The Mayor seeks to define the overall greening framework of a district, and provide to the citizens as much greenery as possible, which will contribute to cleaner air in the city. Developing new urban green space – places covered with grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation—and infrastructure that works with it is a priority in many cities these days. Adding new green space in and around our cities can improve human health, revitalize ecosystems, and boost a region's economy. This plan summarizes our Mayor's efforts and achievements in making the city of Skopje a greener city.



Benefits of urban green space...

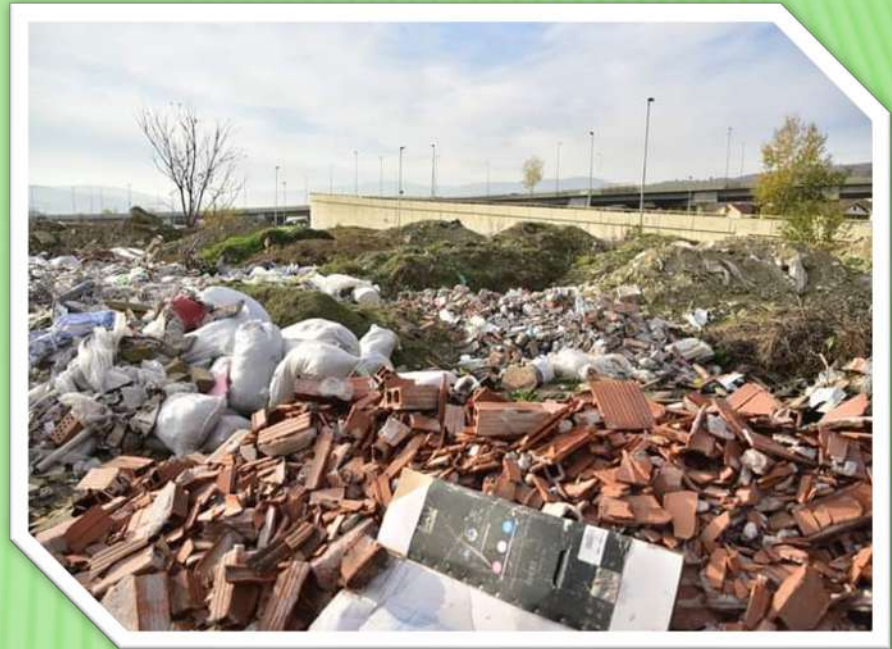


Parks and other public green spaces have many benefits apart from making our city more attractive.



STARTING POINT

On initiative of the Mayor of the City of Skopje, and in accordance with the city program over 250 illegal landfills were cleaned in the past year. For the first time in decades, an action was carried out in Skopje to clean up the illegal landfills where hazardous waste was burned, which was the cause of air, soil and groundwater pollution, which directly affects the quality of life of the citizens. A dedicated link with the mapped illegal landfills has been created in order to provide our citizens with an insight.



City of Skopje Mayor, Danela Arsovska campaigned initiatives aimed at repurposing some of the city's vacant spaces and surveilling frequently used illegal dumping sites. This action carried out by the City of Skopje to clean up all the illegal landfills is the most massive action of this type that has ever been carried out on national level. New green areas have been created where there once were illegal landfills.

CHALLENGES

Environment and air pollution are the biggest challenges we face because for more than 20 years we've had no environmental planning, no appropriate urban planning. No one needs to be reminded of the visible challenges that prevent urban greening. We need to overcome these challenges through a careful study of the physical conditions and land use characteristics of the areas, thorough study and analyses of each potential planting location and carefully chose of plant species.



“In an age of growing concern over where climate change and environmental degradation might lead, cities therefore also represent one of the greatest opportunities to make progress. Cities have become an increasingly important driver of change on the environmental front, including climate change.” says mayor Arsovska.

There are also less obvious, invisible challenges. In many places, the space below ground is even more congested than the space above. One would have difficulty in finding enough space to accommodate the roots of a young tree, not to mention the space required for root growth. Widespread utility diversion is probably unrealistic and causes unacceptable disruption to the local residents.

The greatest challenge of all is perhaps the non-physical one. While most people welcome greening of their district, some may still hesitate or raise objection if a tree is planted in front of their shops or properties. If a tree is blocking the line of sight for a police camera, for example, the tree gets cut down or drastically trimmed so that it's no longer effectively providing shade.

The above challenges are magnified many times to an unimaginable scale as we deal with greening on a district basis. Therefore, we focus our attention on utility diversion at focal areas where we can achieve significant greening impact.

Furthermore, most of the issues involved are not only related to arboriculture; their resolution calls for expertise from many disciplines, including landscape architecture, town planning, civil, structural and traffic engineering and even public relations. It is through the Greening Master Plan initiative, which pools the necessary expertises together and coordinates their efforts, that these challenges are overcome.

Today, we meet these challenges by careful selection of plant species, improving the soil conditions, which take up the loading of the pavement, leaving the soil better able to support healthy trees.

A TASTE OF GREENERY



Since last year, we have been introducing the concept of a green and clean city, through the provision of green architecture. Through a green transition, it is our responsibility to repair the damages and consequences of the long-term neglect of the city, but also to give an incentive to create a healthy city with a high quality of life for all its citizens. The City of Skopje works to provide 100,000 quality seedlings of indigenous tree species per year, intended for afforestation of pre-determined areas in the wider surroundings of the city. We lead and organize spring and autumn actions for reforestation with the employees of the city administration and all city enterprises, schools in the city, partner civil organizations, socially responsible companies and all interested citizens. Skopje will breathe again!



GREENING STRATEGY

KEY FOCUS POINTS

- IMPLEMENTATION OF A GREEN CADASTER
- 5 MEGA PARKS (2 Finished, 2 In progress
1 to go)
- CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WELLS FOR
WATERING PUBLIC GREEN AREAS
- STRATEGIC PROJECT: GREEN CITY FACILITIES
- IMPLEMENTATION OF ISO 14 001
ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARD
- PLANT BOTANICAL GARDEN
- STRATEGIC PROJECT: CONSTRUCTION OF CITY
WASTE WATER PLANT

GREENING ACHIEVEMENTS



We are dedicated to building and arranging green, modern and ecological contents in the city, which are part of the long-term solutions for a cleaner environment and cleaner air for the residents of Skopje.

“Ambitions are high for the City of Skopje. We are confident that we can continue to deliver an increased focus on urban greening and provide a model for sustainable urban green city. A lot of what’s moving us towards green cities is the insistence by local people which want a cleaner and healthier environment. At City of Skopje, we are constantly looking for new ways to increase its impact by building on our success, and are putting considerable research power into actively researching new and realistic ways to do more.” says Mayor Arsovska

Visible achievements

We have already completed the greening of urban areas. A total of 31412 plants of one type and 1.076.954 flowers were planted. They brought significant improvements to the cityscape.

ACHIEVEMENT TABLE

	Deciduous trees	Evergreen trees	Deciduous shrubs	Evergreen shrubs	Flowers
2021	255	167	61	24	8515
2022	4502	2196	3787	6472	677269
Until August 2023	1546	3161	2229	3343	391170

MEGA PARK "DAME GRUEV"

On one of the largest wild landfills in Skopje with an area of over 50,000 square meters, with effort and dedicated work we made the first of the 5 mega parks in Skopje, the mega park "Dame Gruev" in the municipality of Gjorce Petrov. By implementing this project, which is part of the program "For modern Skopje", we are acting with the aim of long-term improvement, protection and preservation of the environment. The park is the first of five mega parks announced by the City of Skopje Mayor, Danela Arsovska. The mega park covers an area of over 30,000 square meters along the Lepenec river in the immediate vicinity of the wastewater treatment plant. On this ground, at the beginning of 2022, an action was carried out to clean up one of the largest illegal landfills in Macedonia, which spread over a territory with an area of over 50,000 square meters.



Now, on this space, a new mega park has grown up, cleaned and adapted. Over 2,200 different types of trees have been planted that fit the space and are adapted to our weather conditions, as well as additional seedlings where there are irrigation systems. In the final phase, urban equipment, benches and waste receptacles are installed, bicycle parking, indoor walking paths, children's playground, pet area, fitness, lighting will be installed, as well as vehicle parking. This park has enriched the content of the municipality, and it will be able to be used by over 40 thousand residents who gravitate to the level of the municipality.

T
H
E

P
R
O
J
E
C
T



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MEGA PARK 1





MEGA PARK 2 CAIR



With the completion of this project, the park will be a place that will contribute to a better quality of life and the environment and will be a corner where residents will have facilities for walking and recreation in their free time", say the City of Skopje. From there, they add that this is one of the numerous measures that complement each other, for Skopje to solve the pollution challenge in the long term.

We are proud to announce that in March 2023, the construction of a new mega-park began, which stretches from the intersection with the Second Macedonian Brigade to the intersection with John Kennedy. The mega-park will cover an area of 30,000 square meters, and will have 500 new trees and seedlings, a new hydrant network and a lawn. At the same time, 2 new sports playgrounds, 2 new children's playgrounds, 2 park areas for pets, a fitness area, 26 new gazebos, new urban equipment, pedestrian paths and fountains are planned in the park.



THE PROJECT

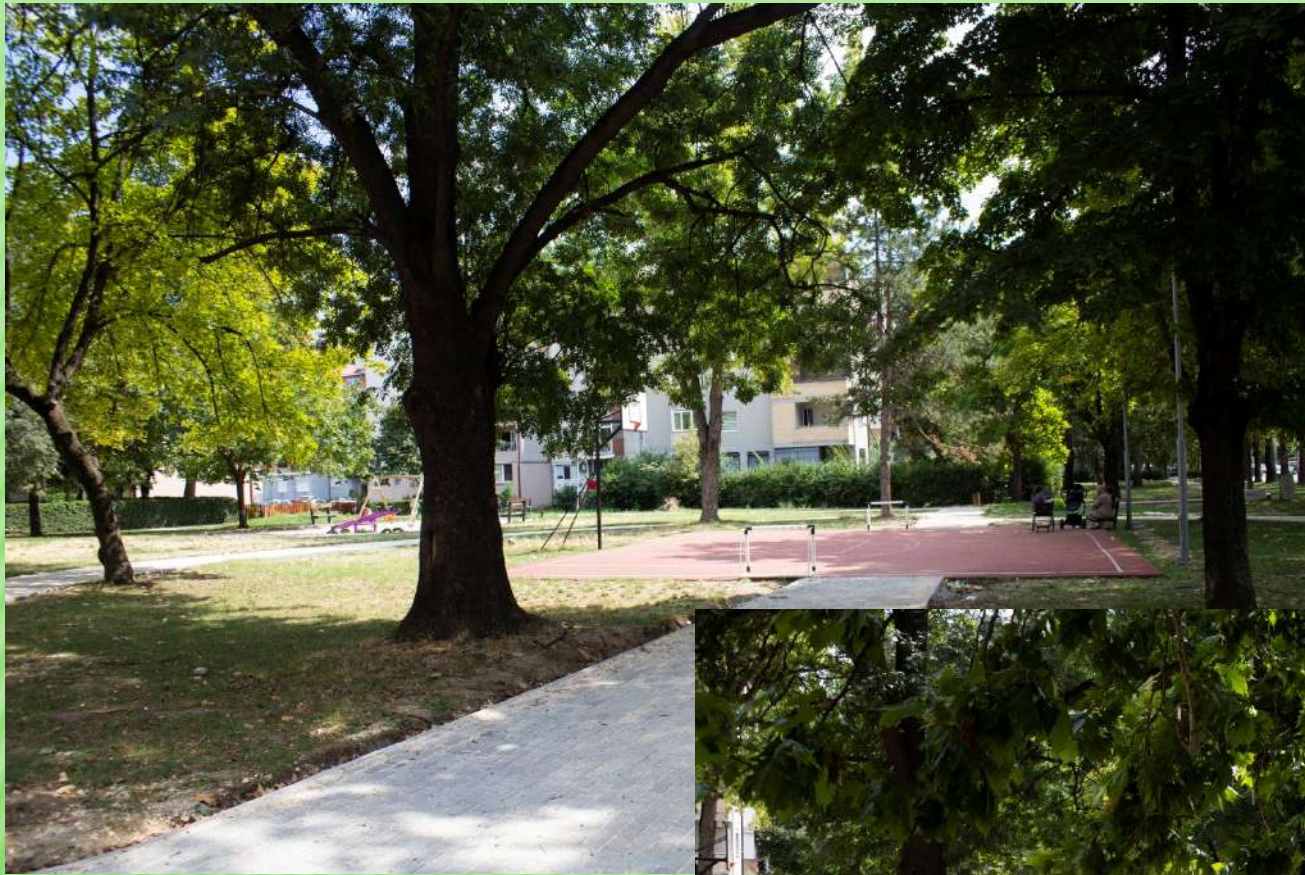


The park covers 30,000 square meters, of which 21,000 will be greenery, while the rest will include two recreational sports fields, including two areas for pets. There is also a fitness area, recreation for all ages and 26 verandas located throughout this area.



THE IMPLEMENTATION MEGA PARK 2



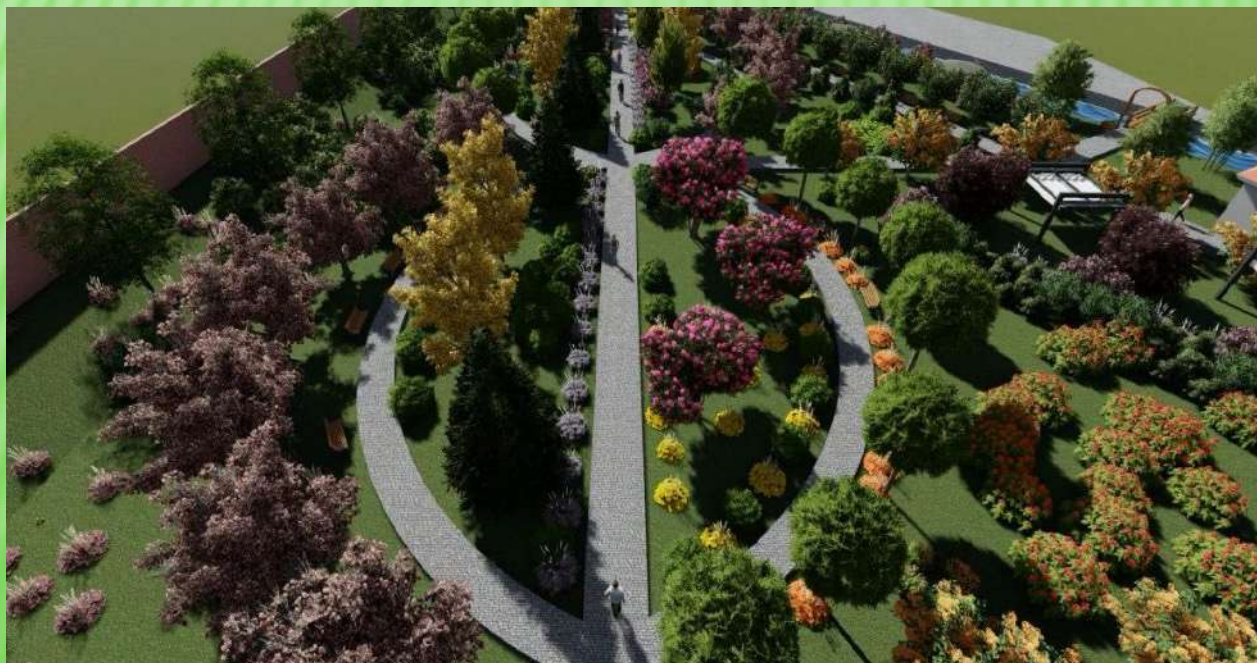


BOTANICAL GARDEN IN ZOO SKOPJE

The city of Skopje and its residents are getting a new Botanical Garden that will spread over 12,600 square meters, and in which over 4,600 unique trees and seedlings will be planted. Observation decks, new urban equipment and numerous other contents for visitors will be installed in the Botanical Garden. It is planned that the garden, which will be within the framework of the ZOO Skopje, will have autochthonous species of plants that are naturally distributed in Macedonia, as well as allochthonous species. There will also be endemic plants specific only to Macedonia. The construction of the Botanical Garden will be extremely important for citizens who love nature and the natural sciences, because visitors will be able to see the contents of the Natural Science Museum, the Zoological Museum and the new Botanical Garden in one place. The realization of this project is part of the program "For Modern Skopje", for the construction of new green areas, because Skopje and its citizens deserve modern and ecological contents that will contribute to the improvement of the environment.

This initiative is part of the "For Modern Skopje" program, which aims to create new green spaces in the city. With this project, the city of Skopje and its residents will receive modern and ecological contents that will contribute to the improvement of the environment and the quality of life of the citizens, announced the mayor Danela Arsovska.

THE PROJECT



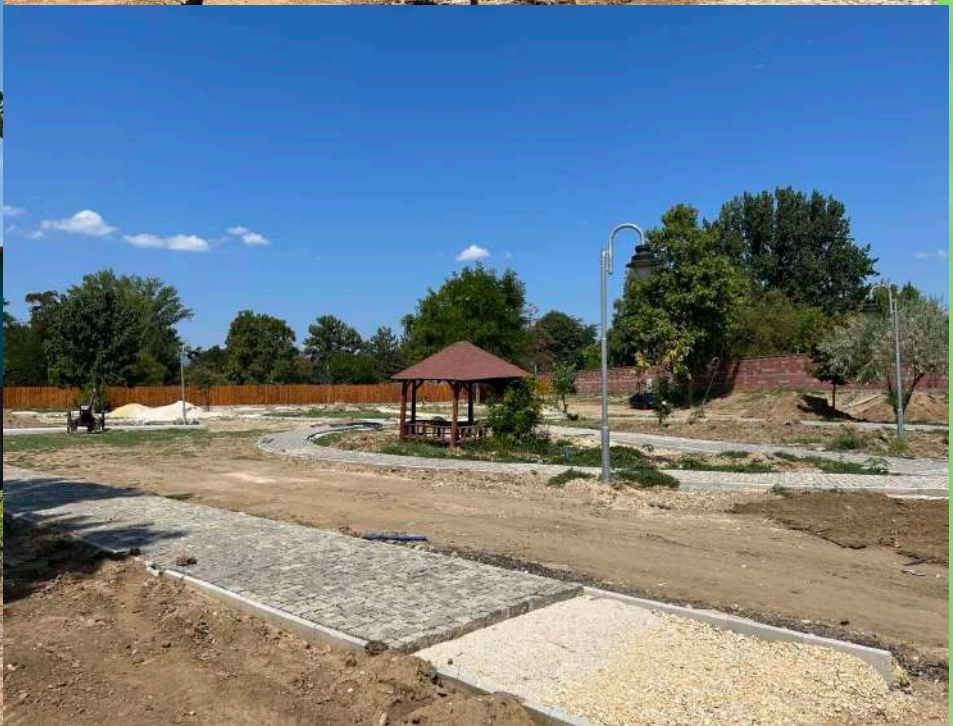


THE REALIZATION



August, 2023

The botanical garden is in the final stage of realization and it is expected to be completed by the end of this year.



PART OF THE CONTINUOUS URBAN GREENING THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF SKOPJE

BOULEVARD 8
SEPTEMVRI

The greenery of the central planter on Ilinden and 8th September boulevards enriched with decorative evergreen shrubs. Distributed in a straight line between the rows of trees, forming a green composition as part of the urban greening realization plan in the city. The arrangement will take place in stages and in the coming days at other locations throughout the city greenery.



Boulevard St.Kliment Ohridski

With new vegetation also enriched the greenery of the central planter on the boulevard St. Kliment Ohridski in the center of the city of Skopje. The activities of landscape planning and arrangement of the boulevard greenery are a significant part in shaping the green contours of public surfaces throughout the city.





The city of Skopje beautified with new horticultural solutions in the municipality of Gjorce Petrov and Karposh



Gjorce Petrov, Skopje



JOINT EFFORT OF ALL

City of Skopje Mayor, Danela Arsovska the environmental protection department of City of Skopje and the Public enterprise for parks and greenery provide guidance and oversee the development and implementation of the greenery plan. This team reflects the high priority of the City of Skopje to improve the quality and quantity. We have involved the frontline working level staff and formed working groups to resolve important issues, such as traffic safety, land use planning, species selection and post-planting care of plants, that might arise during the development and implementation greenery in the territory.

Education and Promotion

Apart from designing and implementing the greening works, we also promote greening by explaining its benefits to the public through publications on the media and through exhibitions and public debates to schools, government institutions and relevant professional bodies.

During the course of implementation of the greenery plans, we received relevant letters of appreciation from the general organizations, which represent strong impetus to go forward.

