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JANA TABBARA

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Capstone Project Coordinator: Yaser Abunnasr

Primary Advisor:
Mehran Madani

Secondary Advisors
Yaser Abunnasr, Imad Gemayel

Approved by:

Dr. Yaser Abunnasr, Assistant Professor
Department of Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

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01
INTRODUCTION
Ramlet el Bayda is located in Southern end of The Beirut corniche and it stretches along 1 km. It is known for Avenue de Charles de Gaulle promenade.

The sea promenade or “corniche” is becoming the heart of public meeting points of the entire overcrowded country, regardless of the religion and status. In summer, the beach is one of the most visited places in the city: it is where activities, gatherings and events are held. Moreover, Ramlet el Bayda is known to be the last sandy beach in Beirut open to the public.
INTRODUCTION | History

Figure 1.4 | Evolution of Ramlet el Bayda

Figure 1.5 | Rapid urbanization of Ramlet el Bayda
With the rapid and uncontrolled urbanization, Beirut is left with very limited amount of green public spaces. Beirut green public spaces ratio is amongst the lowest in the world. In fact, it only covers 11% of the city. This promotes scenario unhealthy lifestyle.

The Ramlet el Bayda garden represents a small portion of the green spaces available. Horsh Beirut is known to be the biggest and makes up 72% of the total green areas.

Today, only four gardens are highly recognized and successful: Jesuites garden, Sanayeh garden and Mufti Khaled garden. The three of them cater for the needs of the residents regardless of the age.

Ramlet el Bayda Garden does not provide any of the programs. Thus, it is left under-used and under-appreciated.
INTRODUCTION | Contextualizing Ramlet el Bayda garden in Beirut

Figure 1.11 | Neglected Ramlet el Bayda garden
02
SITE BOUNDARIES
The site chosen for further indepth analysis and the future intervention stretches from the Ramlet el Bayda residential area all the way to the beach.

The site boundaries is comprised of three entities: the public garden, the road and the public beach.
There are two major issues that have been encountered on site.

On one hand, the public garden is disintegrated from the residential area.

On the other hand, there is an apparent physical division: The road separates both the beach and the garden. This leaves a break between upper and lower Ramlet el Bayda.
03

PROJECT STATEMENT
Ramlet el Bayda is the last public beach in Beirut city. Over a decade, the garden has been neglected for unknown reasons. This leaves it deserted and lacking integration to its immediate surrounding.

Today, both the garden and the beach are disconnected making it difficult for pedestrian to access the site at ease.

This project aims on bridging this social and physical gap by extending the boundaries of the garden to create a dynamic and transitioning urban landscape.

It is important to create inviting places for people to enable the garden to as the core for pedestrian circulation flow.

Providing the site with a particular homogenous identity can solve the site issues. Three gradually transitioning platforms are provided to cater for the immediate surroundings: The intimate platform provides employees and residents with a buffered picnic area and the active platform provides the community with varied programs such as a kids play area, a dynamic beach entrance, a pool, etc. A core area, where markets and various festivals to take place, serves as a transition between both platforms.

Figure 3.1 | Theoretical support: New urbanism and Placelessness
04
INVENTORY & ANALYSIS
The majority of people attending the beach come from various areas of Beirut such as Ouzai, Chiyah, Raouche, and Ramlet el Bayda.

Also, most of the beach goers are from low-income background.
The majority of the site users attend the beach due to the concentration of activities along the corniche and the beachside.

The type of activities changes according to seasonality. Therefore, the garden is left as black hole.
The following axonometric points out the general network of Ramlet el Bayda. It includes the different flows of pedestrian movement, the circulation of the area in general and within the park, the accessibility in terms of pedestrian access and the different types of entrances and transitioning stairs and lastly, the connectivity.

There is a very limited pedestrian circulation and accessibility due to the many changes in levels and the presence of various urban features such as stairs, walls, etc.

Therefore, people coming from the neighborhood have trouble accessing the beach.
INVENTORY & ANALYSIS | Network

Figure 4.8 | Slope analysis

Figure 4.9 | Horizontal and vertical circulation

Figure 4.10 | Urban Features
The garden is like a green oasis in the middle of an urban setting. The island effect is emphasized by the obstructing facades that serve as a barrier for visual connection.

This matter supports the disconnection of the garden not only with the beach but to its surrounding as well.
There is a strong active surveillance on the upper part of the site which brings discomfort to the area because it is constantly being monitored.

Garden visitors gather mainly where there is shade and where the trees hide them from any type of surveillances.
By overlapping the surveillance and activities, I was able to analyze the social pattern: people are mostly concentrated on the beachside due to the different triggered senses that emerge from the different types of activities.

In conclusion, due to its proximity to a gathering hub, the Ramlet el Bayda garden is a potential space that could be turned into a place.
05
PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS
Ramlet el Bayda was once known for its abundance in coastal sand dunes: hence its name *white sands*. Due to the rapid urbanization these dunes no longer exist. Therefore, this concept is about bringing them back.

This concept disregards the integration of the garden to the neighborhood. It only focuses on the garden/beach link through an underpass.

This concept is about creating three interconnected platforms: The beach, the road and the garden. Every platform or scenario introduces the users to several experiences based on triggering the different senses.

This concept also disregards the link to the surrounding neighborhood. It only provides and overpass linking the garden to the beach.

Finally, Spaces of Encounter focuses on linking the corners of the buildings that will cut through the garden. These linkages will enable walkability, visual connectivity and accessibility.

Here, the garden is integrated in its immediate surrounding.
06
FINAL CONCEPT
The final concept is merging both Trilogy of Space and Spaces of Encounter. The final product focuses on bridging both the garden and the beach. It is important to transform the garden into a place and reintegrate it within the area.

The outcome of this concept helped me define platforms to spread different experiences by triggering the missing senses along upper Ramlet el Bayda. Creating a dynamic and transitionning landscape will serve as a core to allow pedestrians to circulate along the site.
Merging both the urban fabric and the organic dunes have lead to geometric sand dunes shapes that are used in the design to remind visitors of the abundant coastal sand dunes that used to exist in the area.
SCHEMATIC DESIGN | Mood board
EDGE PARK
W Architecture

Location: Brooklyn, USA

Summary: The Edge Park seeks to bring people to the river and link the ecosystem with the fabric of the community. The design emphasizes the confrontation of forces at the water edge and encourages public use.

Problem: The waterfront has been dominated by industry and its relics for centuries making it off limit to the public.

Solution: New zoning changed the public interface with the water edge by increasing density and emphasizing access.

Design Approach: New Urbanism: connections, walkability, blurring boundaries between land and water to benefit the community.

Elements of Design: Pedestrian greenway, sloping lawn, piers reach the water from within the park and stone river bank contrasts with concrete bulkhead.

Users: Residents

Considerations: Ecological and Community
GUBEI PROMENADE
SWA

Location: Shanghai, China

Size: 356000 sqm

Summary: Creation of a comfortable public realm in the urban community.

Problem: The disappearance of the intimate alleyways in traditional Shangainese courtyard housing, a cacophony of multi-lane boulevards, elevated expressways, concentric ring roads and freeways have taken over the urban layer.

Solution: Providing a pedestrian open space that is safe, multi-functional, sustainable, fun and exciting for all ages.

Design Approach: New Urbanism and Sustainable design.

Elements of Design: The expressive geometries of the glass tile fountain compliment the tree allee and offers respite from the surrounding urban context

Users: Residents, business-men.

Considerations: cultural infrastructure, environmental sustainability, healthy living, interpretive nature, and inventive design.
**AUTOBAHN HIGHWAY**
Private company

**Location:** Hamburg, Germany

**Size:** 242800 sqm

**Summary:** Hide the highway underground and cover it with green space to reconnect a divided city.

**Problem:** Busiest highway divides the city in two.

**Solution:** restitching the neighborhoods through green spaces and reduce noise pollution.

**Design Approach:** Green network.

**Elements of Design:** Open meadows, woods, bikes paths, community gardens, tree-lined squares, etc.

**Users:** Residents.

**Considerations:** Sustainable design and healthy living.
07
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
Beirut lacks public open spaces. This simple approach that revolves around placefulness and new urbanism can be applied to other remnant gardens in the city. The design deals with transforming the garden from an abandoned space into an integrated place. Moreover and aims on enhancing the quality of urban life.

Figure 7.1 | Rendered plan

Figure 7.2 | Section through the site
Figure 7.3 | Section through the picnic area

Figure 7.4 | Section through the playground

Figure 7.5 | Section through the beach entrance
Figure 7.6 | Amphitheatre

Figure 7.7 | Beach entrance

Figure 7.8 | Southern viewing platform

Figure 7.9 | Overpass above the beach

Figure 7.10 | Northern viewing platform and tanning beds
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT | Details

Figure 7.17 | Hardscape details
Figure 7.18 | Softscape details

Zoom-in | Overpass entrance
Scale 1:100

Zoom-in | Children’s playground
Scale 1:100

Zoom-in | Buffer
Scale 1:100
The lighting aims on creating a particular atmosphere at night. The lighting mood chosen focuses on highlighting the pathways between the different planting structures. This will provide a safe environment for visitors and guidance within the designed site.
REFERENCES


