Urban Park Connector Network in Hong Kong:

Kwun Tong Case Study

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Abstract

Urban park is an important asset of a city. It provides multiple functions to urbanites, namely in the recreational, social, psychological and ecological aspects. As urban population continues to grow worldwide, adequate provision of urban parks is an important factor determining the liveability of a city. This situation is particularly crucial to Hong Kong — a city characterized by high population density and compact development. In the absence of a comprehensive master plan for urban development, urban parks are inevitably fragmented and unconnected. The spatial segregation of urban parks prohibited the optimum use of park facilities by its citizens. Land in a city is a scare and valuable resource, and acquiring land for new urban park development is a difficult endeavour. One way to satisfy people’s increasing needs for outdoor activities is by linking up the existing urban parks together. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to test the hypothesis that urban park network can promote efficient use of existing park facilities and that it contributes to the enhancement of the overall environmental quality of the study area — the Kwun Tong District, which is the first satellite town built in Hong Kong in the post-war period. Different types of landuses have been evolved in the district over time. Urban park was not part of the urban design in the early stage of development of the District. As a consequence, urban parks developed subsequently are scattered and spatially unconnected. This study consists of two main parts. Firstly, this study investigates the park visitation habits of park visitors in the study area through an onsite questionnaire survey. Secondly, the study employs GIS network analysis techniques to simulate the diverse park connector network scenarios in the study area. The results revealed that most park visitors in the District do not conduct multi-park visiting trips. It also unveiled factors affecting visitors’ level of satisfaction of existing park facilities. By applying the network efficiency evaluation
method, the study attempts to find out the most efficient and effective scenario of park connector network in the study area. The findings of both the visitor survey and the network analysis of urban park connector systems will inform park planning, design and management professionals and scholars of cognate academic fields to consider the merits and drawbacks of having urban park connectors in our city.
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