

Press release

Nature and technology to enhance citizens' well-being and climate resilience

“Open societies need open spaces“: construction of Al Urubah Park underway

Al Urubah is the first digitally driven park within the Green Riyadh program, where LAND has implemented its expertise as a driver of sustainable development in compliance with the Saudi Vision 2030.

Saudi Arabia, March 11, 2024 – Saudi Arabia's sustainable revolution takes a step forward. Construction work has started in **Al Urubah Park: a 75-hectare park** located within the urban grid on the central East side of Riyadh, **planned by LAND for the Royal Commission for Riyadh City**. This innovative green-blue infrastructure represents a paradigm shift in **urban planning under extreme conditions** as it fosters the citizens' well-being and climate resilience in the capital of KSA.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is pioneering a transformative approach to urban development, driven by the ambitious goals outlined in **Saudi Vision 2030**. With a focus on government efficiency, economic growth, and citizen well-being, the Royal Commission for Riyadh City has launched the **Green Riyadh Program** to create vibrant, sustainable urban spaces for residents and visitors alike.

As the **first park within the Green Riyadh Program**, Al Urubah Park represents a milestone built under the goal of creating a true urban oasis where the local community can satisfy the universal desire to **reconnect with nature**. The existing natural network of the City becomes the main framework to activate this strategy and contributes to create extensive open green spaces in the city as a **sustainable tool to fight climate change**, capable of generating functional benefits in terms of environmental protection.

A 2.7 km Garden Boulevard frames nature at its heart, encouraging visitors to **gather and socialize along its roof top promenade** that offers panoramic views of the park. This living membrane hosts restaurants and amenities accessible from the Outer park as well as from the Inner park. The Inner park provides a range of leisure and educational attractions – such as an urban beach, a sport esplanade, a green amphitheatre, a music stage, four theme gardens – all enhanced by a supporting **digital ecosystem** to appeal to all age groups.

Nature draws inspiration from the presence of the hidden water and its interplay with the urban landscape. The project follows the organic flow of nature featuring **over 10,000 trees, winding pathways crafted from local soil, and contemporary urban furniture made from Riyadh stone and granite**.

In this unique scenario, the **digital landscape**, envisioned as a multimedia extension of the natural landscape, becomes an integral part of visitors' experience, thanks to a multitude of devices with augmented reality functions. Technology serves not only to celebrate art, nature, culture and traditions but also to **engage the public and heighten awareness of environmental challenges**.

A future-proof **water management system** makes Al Urubah Park a global resilience model and a benchmark in innovative urban landscape design. This extensive **green-blue infrastructure**, acting as a stormwater detention basin, hosts 475.000 m³ of rainwater with an emptying time of 24 hours. **Entirely designed in BIM, Al Urubah Park mitigates flooding** and manages the hydrographic basin of Wadi Al-Aysen, in an area of Riyadh particularly prone to such events.

"Al Urubah Park embodies our commitment to regenerating vacant urban spaces through the rediscovery of their identity and vocation, to create liveable places for a sharing and inclusive society. Through the harmonious integration of nature and technology, the park pledges significant environmental advantages and an elevated standard of living for citizens and visitors, aligning with the Quality of Life Program outlined in Vision 2030. Our involvement in Saudi Arabia and the MENA region is set to reach new heights with the establishment of LAND MENA. With our presence on the ground, we are dedicated to making meaningful contributions to these transformative initiatives," **asserts lead designer Andreas Kipar**.

Credits:

Client: Royal Commission for Riyadh City

Area: 75 ha

Location: Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Project Team: LAND Italia (team: Andreas Kipar, Luisa Bellini, Jens Hoffmann, Stefano Roman, Ali Akram, Erica Boncaldo, Agata Borecka, Jad El Hayek, Sebastiano Favaro, Roberta Filippini, Elena Grilli, Giulia Morandini, Andrea Occhetti, Cecilia Ricci, Fiorella Schiavo, Francesca Villa, Susanna Vissani)

Schiattarella Associati (Architecture)

Manens-Tifs (Engineering, MEP)

V3 Middle East Engineering Consultant (Architect of Record)

Ikon (Digital Landscape)

Drees&Sommer (Sustainability, Waste Management, Project Management)

Cannata&Partners (Lighting)

AMA (Historical Heritage, Mobility)

Thomas Schoenauer (Art)

Kamel Louafi (Culture)

Leftloft (Graphic Communication)

Watercube (Water Features)

Montana Spa (Stormwater Management)

DG Jones and Partners (Cost Consultant)

MEAC/Hunter (Irrigation)

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LAND

LAND – an acronym for Landscape, Architecture, Nature, and Development – is an international landscape consultancy with offices in Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland. Andreas Kipar and a Team of 200 landscape architects, architects, urban planners, agronomists, engineers, and researchers are dedicated to the regeneration of regions, cities, and places since 1990.

LAND's consulting, planning, and design activities aim to improve people's well-being and environment through the implementation of climate-positive solutions and participatory processes that lead to sustainable development.

We provide consultancy to public and private clients on how to innovate with nature, applying international policies and promoting collaborative planning procedures. Together with our clients and our extensive network of partners, we leverage the opportunities of the green transition for our communities.

Among our main projects: Green Rays strategy, Porta Nuova, Piazzale Loreto, and the re-development of the former EXPO site MIND in Milan; Essen's Urban Open Space Strategy and Krupp Park, comprising ThyssenKrupp HQ, and the Freiheit Emscher in Essen; Ruhr Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy; the renaturation of the Airolo valley and Cassarate River Park in Switzerland; Saint-Laurent biodiversity Corridor in Montreal; Al Urubah Park in Riyadh and EXPO 2020 Dubai in the UAE; strategic consulting in landscaping, infrastructure, and renewable energy through, among other things, Landscape Information Modeling LIM©, as well as the research and innovation projects UrbAlytics and T-Factor funded by the European Commission. LAND's work has been recognized through numerous prestigious international awards, amongst them Premio Mercurio, MIPIM, Wan Awards, Biennale Pisa, Passive and Low Energy Architecture Award (PLEA), European Garden Award 2023.

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