

The Role of Green Infrastructure in Strengthening the Cultural Identity of Downtown Zones in Medium-Sized Polish Cities

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Abstract:

This research explores the potential of green solutions in the downtown areas of medium-sized cities in Poland to protect the cultural landscape of medium-sized cities in Poland. Maintaining urban identity is a global issue affecting many cities, with historic monuments and greenery playing a key role. This study focuses on the city centers of the Masovian Voivodeship. Poland, as one of the countries of the so-called Eastern Bloc, has experienced numerous post-transition processes that have threatened the identity of Polish cities. The aim is to examine whether, and to what extent, existing green spaces meet contemporary standards and address contemporary civilizational challenges. It also aims to identify potential for improvements in this area, including by identifying vacant spaces that could be adapted, for example, into pocket parks. The downtown areas were selected to illustrate the issues under study and provide opportunities for comparative analysis. Cities exceeding 20,000 were studied as key administrative centers with preserved historical functional and spatial structures. The analyses were based on archival cartographic studies, a topographic database, and GIS software for

geospatial data analysis and visualization. The research aimed to identify existing green infrastructure elements that impact the cultural landscape and to assess the extent to which this system could be supplemented. The study identified gaps in meeting standards and demonstrated opportunities for supplementation.

Keywords:

Urban planning, urban identity, green infrastructure.