



KOPER CENTRAL PARK: A NEW STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN'S INFRASTRUCTURE

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New Koper Urban Park is set between Piranska Road and the Semedela promenade, and between the canal and the area just beyond the city market. Piranska Road represents a new stage in the development of the town's infrastructure, while the promenade is one of the more important features of the town having once acted as the link between the city on the then-island and the mainland. As such, it counts among the characteristic elements in the panorama of Koper. The connection ran between the sea and the salt ponds. As the city developed during the past decades, the former salt-pond area was gradually filled in.



This area needs an intervention which will bolster the leisure activities of Koper's inhabitants and

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further connect the old part of the city with the suburbs of Semedela, Olmo and Markovec, which are strewn across the slopes of Markov Hill.



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The basic building blocks of the new city park are monolithic, undulating urban elements. Their controlled placement in the space, in combination with a pronounced topography of the green surfaces, softly divides the whole of the park's surface into individual introverted programme isles. The design of the individual urban elements consistently follows the different programmes. In some places, they are taller and act as a shelter from views and the noisy surroundings; elsewhere, they are lower and allow for an unimpeded contact between programme zones. The organically designed urban elements form stands for viewers, an obstacle course for children, climbing walls, a backdrop to a seaside bar, a concert venue, a children's playground, a reading area, and more. Due to the proximity of the sea, the programme zones are appointed with numerous water elements. A pond, ground sprinklers, a geyser, parabolic water jets, cascades and a water platform in

combination with the variegated urban elements encourage an active use of the space and an expansion of the future beach towards the interior of the park.



The innovative layout of the city park is a great new asset for the citizens of Koper, since it enables the development of programmes which the city cannot offer at present. The new park is an attraction and, with its unique form and manner of spatial organisation, it transcends a merely functional park regulation. It represents a prototype for further designing of the wider area, as well as motivation for development-oriented attitudes in regard to other sections of the Slovene seacoast currently in a state of decay.