



A View Towards The Future of Green Spaces in Cities Through The Central Park Example *

Central Park Örneği Üzerinden Kentlerde Yeşil Alanların Geleceğine Yönelik Bakış

ABSTRACT

Urban green areas are areas that play an important role in meeting the physical, mental and social needs of people living in cities. Urban green areas should contribute to the aesthetic beautification of the city and at the same time prevent air pollution. When today's green areas are examined, considering the social and ecological importance of urban ecosystems, which have an important place in human life, "ecosystem services studies", a prominent approach method, has a positive relationship with urban green areas. Urban green spaces such as Central Park in America are excellent examples that meet these needs.

Keywords: Urban Green Spaces, Green Space Design Criteria, Central Park.

ÖZET

Kentsel yeşil alanlar, şehirlerde yaşayan insanların fiziksel, mental ve sosyal ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için önemli bir rol oynayan alanlardır. Kentsel yeşil alanların, şehrin estetik açıdan güzelleşmesine katkıda bulunması ve aynı zamanda hava kirliliğini engellemesi gerekmektedir.

Günümüzdeki yeşil alanlar incelendiğinde insan yaşamında önemli bir yeri olan kentsel ekosistemlerin, sosyal ve ekolojik açıdan önemi göz önüne alındığında, öne çıkan bir yaklaşım yöntemi olan "ekosistem hizmetleri çalışmaları" kentsel yeşil alanlar ile olumlu bir ilişki içerisindedir. Amerika'da bulunan Central Park gibi kentsel yeşil alanlar, bu ihtiyaçları karşılayan mükemmel örneklerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kentsel Yeşil Alanlar, Yeşil Alan Tasarım Kriterleri, Central Park.

INTRODUCTION

Open and green spaces have a critical role in meeting the needs of individuals living in busy urban life to develop social relations, get away from stress and have a pleasant time. However, today, with the influence of population growth and rapid industrial and technological developments, unplanned urbanization has emerged. Unplanned and irregular urbanization is destroying the natural environment and ecological balance more and more every day. In cities, the areas that should be reserved for the needs of the society are limited, and existing green areas are decreasing and in some cases completely disappearing. Especially considering the dense building construction in city centers, people's need for green spaces is becoming more evident every day.

Urban green areas have a critical role in ensuring livability with the various ecosystem services they provide and their effects that increase human welfare. Factors such as rapidly increasing migration, unplanned construction and concreting in recent years have caused cities to move away from the natural environment, further increasing the need for urban green areas (Ergan, 2011).

After the Covid-19 epidemic, social relations and daily life habits have changed and these changes have shaped the use of urban areas and spaces. For this reason, the need for green spaces is of great importance for people to socialize with each other, find inner balance and relax from time to time. Especially for people living in the city, the biggest saviors in meeting these needs are definitely city parks.

Urban parks, which are a part of urban green areas, are public spaces that determine the physical and social environment of the city space, can be used for educational, cultural and recreational purposes and are open to all segments of society. City parks, as one of the functional areas of urban space, provide many benefits (Alkay and Ocakcı, 2003).

The main purpose of the research is to determine the need for green spaces and existing deficiencies and to conduct a detailed analysis of the planning and accessibility criteria of parks in urban green areas, especially through the

¹ Asist. Prof. Dr., Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, Faculty of Fine Arts and Design, Bilecik, Türkiye, ORCID: 0000-0002-7847-3284

² Architect, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, ORCID: 0000-0002-4226-7024

³ Assoc. Prof. Dr., Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, Faculty of Fine Arts and Design, Bilecik, Türkiye, ORCID: 0000-0001-8876-2621

Serdar Kasap¹

Gizem Seri Yeşil²

Parisa Güneş³

[How to Cite This Article](#)

Kasap, S., Seri Yeşil, G. & Güneş, P. (2024). "A View Towards The Future of Green Spaces in Cities Through The Central Park Example" International Social Sciences Studies Journal, (e-ISSN:2587-1587) Vol:10, Issue:6; pp:879-886. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12592510>

Arrival: 12 April 2024

Published: 29 June 2024

Social Sciences Studies Journal is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

example of Central Park. Based on the results of the analyses, it is aimed to understand various principles regarding the planning of urban green areas and to develop alternative solutions.

URBAN OPEN SPACE

While urban open spaces play an important role by connecting various regions within the city, they are spaces that are open to the common use of all city residents and have no buildings on them. These areas are a central part of urban life and serve as important venues where a variety of social activities, social interactions, and public life occur. Additionally, urban open spaces enable city residents to connect with nature, engage in physical activities and get away from the stress of city life. Planning and protecting these open spaces plays a critical role in the sustainability and livability of cities.

Defining Urban Open Spaces

A city is a settlement that is in the process of continuous social evolution and meets human needs such as settlement, shelter, transportation, work, rest and entertainment, where almost no agricultural activities are carried out, where the population density is higher than rural areas and consists of small neighborhood units (Keleş, 1980).

As can be understood from the explanations, cities can be characterized as densely populated areas. In physical planning, the structures of these cities (architectural elements, buildings, etc.) and the spaces between them (open-green areas) have an important place. In this context, an important component that shapes the urban texture is the open spaces within the void spaces.

Urban open spaces are important entities in urban life and are public spaces designed to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of individuals and are generally open to broad participation of the society.

As can be understood from these definitions, open spaces are resting places outside of closed structures or naturally left, other than agricultural or residential areas, where people carry out their vital functions. Urban open spaces can be defined as surfaces and spaces where individuals or society meet various recreational needs.

Classification of Urban Open Spaces

Factors such as their intended use, distance from the city center, surface area and functional features are of great importance in determining urban open spaces. These factors provide guidance on how these open spaces are planned and designed. They are important parameters taken into account in the planning and design processes of open spaces and play an effective role in determining various classification systems. In other words, factors such as why a park exists, how large it is, or what purposes it serves are effective in determining the characteristics of that open space. Urban open spaces are divided into three categories according to usage: public, semi-private and private areas.

Open spaces such as streets, boulevards, squares, courtyards, pedestrian areas, bicycle paths, urban woodlands, parks, playgrounds and sports areas, functional green areas (cemeteries, agricultural and hobby gardens, natural resources protection strips, etc.), open-air museums, Elements such as cinemas, theaters, water surfaces and parts of buildings open to the outside (balconies, terraces, etc.) are evaluated under the open space category (Aydemir, 2004).

Table 1: Classification of Open Spaces According to Aydemir

According to the Dominance of Green Elements	According to Ownership Status	According to Recreation Process
<p>Urban Open Spaces</p> <p>External Usage Areas Open and semi-open private areas squares courtyards terraces balconies</p> <p>Circulation Areas Vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian paths</p>	<p>Public Open Spaces Areas whose ownership is entirely in public hands</p> <p>Private Outdoor Spaces Privately owned entertainment and recreation areas</p> <p>Semi-Private Open Spaces such as terraces, balconies and verandas</p> <p>Semi-Public Open Spaces Areas such as side and front gardens that are privately owned</p>	<p>parks</p> <p>Special Purpose Park and Garden</p> <p>Sports fields</p> <p>Natural and Semi-Natural Areas</p> <p>Urban, Other Open and Green Areas</p>

Source: The table was prepared by Gizem Seri Yeşil for the report.

URBAN GREEN SPACES

Green spaces are an element within open space classifications and play an important role in the lives of individuals living in the urban environment. Green areas not only add visual aesthetic value, but also provide suitable spaces for recreational and sports activities..

Identification of Urban Green Spaces

Green areas are open spaces designed and arranged to meet people's needs such as education, culture and recreation. These areas can take various forms, such as parks, gardens, botanical gardens and natural reserves. These areas, which are open to public participation, are used for outdoor activities, picnics, sports events, recreation and recreation purposes. At the same time, green spaces are of environmental and ecological importance, helping to protect wildlife and support biodiversity. Therefore, green spaces are important public spaces that increase not only physical but also spiritual and social well-being.

Urban green areas are areas with completely permeable soil properties, formed by the combination of various species and genera of plants. It covers all areas within public or private property that are used or not used for recreational purposes (Aydemir, 2004).

Urban green areas are areas open to public use in built-up areas, designed for the purpose of resting, traveling, performing various recreational activities and being close to nature (Keleş, 1984).

Urban green areas are public areas located within the city that determine the qualities of both the physical and social environment, serve educational, cultural and recreational purposes and are accessible to all segments of society (Yuen, 1996).

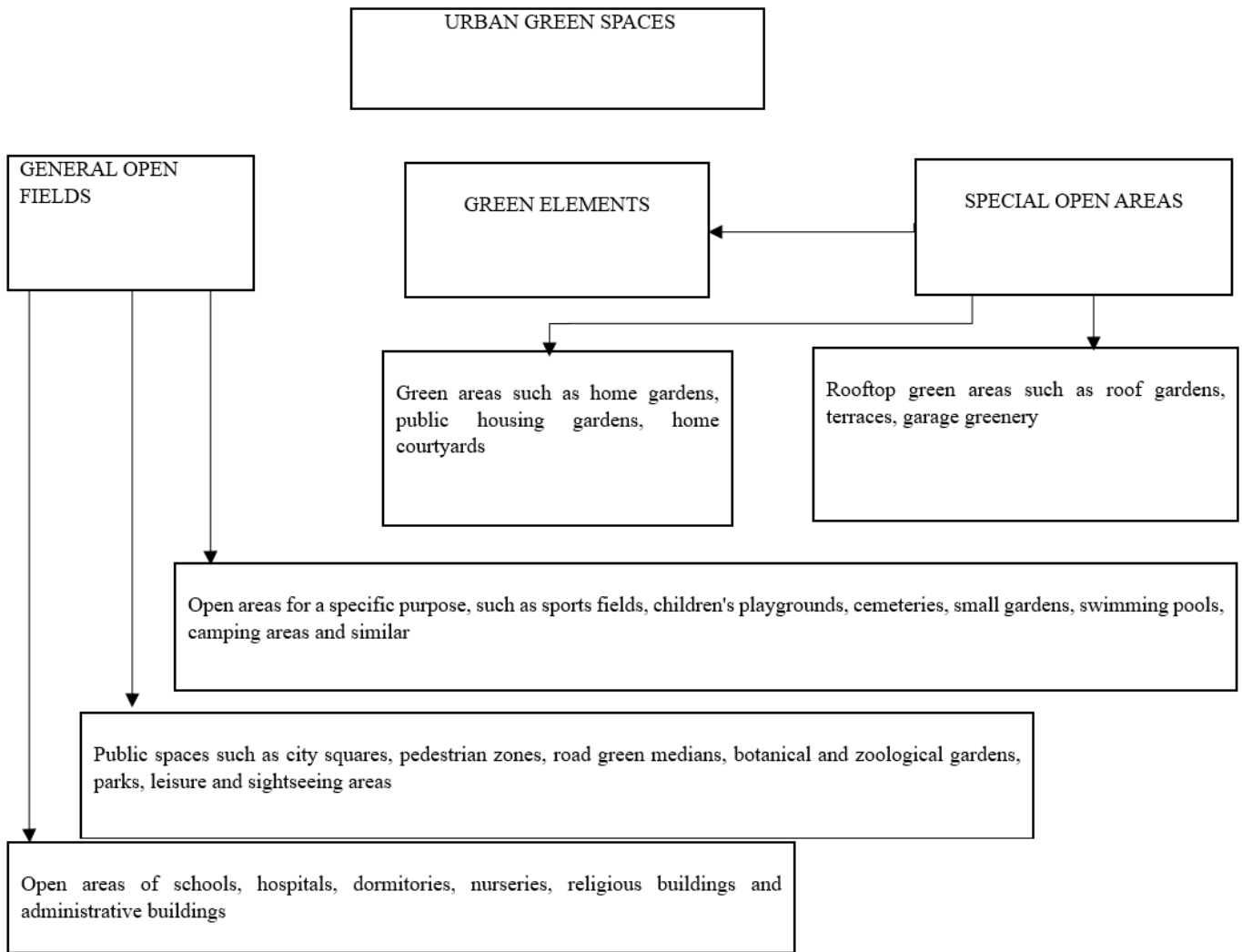
In these definitions, green areas are considered as open spaces that serve the society for purposes such as education, culture and recreation. Green areas not only provide economic and ecological benefits, but also have functions such as psychological healing, social integration and strengthening social bonds. These areas not only offer their users physical rest and sports opportunities, but also provide suitable environments for participation in cultural events, education and social interaction. From this perspective, green areas are important elements that require a multifaceted evaluation and strategic planning in urban planning processes.

Classification of Urban Green Areas

Urban green areas are important areas that make cities and urban areas more sustainable and livable. These areas can support overall health and well-being, improving quality of life. Green areas can be divided into various categories depending on their characteristics and can be subjected to different classifications based on these characteristics. Green areas may vary depending on their location, area size and functions. This diversity is an important factor in structuring and using green areas in the urban environment (Ersoy, 1994).

Green areas are divided into two main categories: private and public open spaces. This classification was made to describe different regulations for the use and access of green spaces. While private open spaces are usually controlled by specific organizations or individuals, public open spaces are open to all members of society and are generally intended for public use. This classification helps adapt green spaces to various use scenarios and planning strategies (Ter, 2002).

Table 2: Classification of Green Areas According to Ter



Source: The table was prepared by Gizem Seri Yeşil for the report.

Green areas are evaluated according to whether they are inside or outside the settlement, their functions and functions. In this classification, green spaces can be active or passive. Active green spaces are areas that are used effectively and where people generally engage in activities such as recreation or sports. Passive green areas are areas that contribute to the visual and natural environment and are used for rest and relaxation purposes. This classification provides a better understanding of green areas according to their various characteristics and intended uses (Çetiner, 1975).

Table 3: Classification of Green Areas

A.Green Areas in Terms of Their Relationship with Settlement Areas			
Green Areas Within the Settlement city parks neighborhood parks nurseries cemeteries sports fields gaming places home gardens children's gardens		Green Areas Within the Settlement Forests woods regional parks botanical gardens recreation areas picnic areas Sports fields such as golf, mountaineering, archery	
B. Green Areas in Terms of Functions			
Recreation Areas large woodlands Forests groves nurseries cemeteries parks regional parks national parks city parks neighborhood parks	Sports fields Sports Centers Place for all kinds of sports Stadium racing venues Archery horsemanship Water sports Golf Tennis Mountaineering Volleyball - Basketball	Playgrounds Sandboxes for children aged 0-3 Playgrounds for children aged 3-6 Playgrounds with equipment for children between the ages of 7-12 For students aged 13-18 and 18-24	Entertain places Sports fields serving the public picnic areas recreation areas Private family gardens Theme park
C. Green Areas in Terms of Functions			
Active Green Spaces These are areas that have a preventive function against dust, smoke, heat and erosion in residential areas.		Passive Green Spaces Areas used as ornamental elements that establish a connection between urban texture and natural texture.	

Source: The table was prepared by Gizem Seri Yeşil for the report.

Green Area Norms

Green space norms are standards and guidelines set for planning, designing, management and maintenance of green spaces in urban areas. Norms for green areas vary significantly from country to country and city to city. Various norms and standards are established depending on the types, contents, usage patterns and area sizes of green areas. These standards are generally based on the following factors:

- a. Size of population served,
- b. Social and economic structure,
- c. Features of the settlement,
- D. Natural features of the city such as topography, soil quality and vegetation,
- to. Climate conditions.

These factors affect the different types and characteristics of green areas in the city, urban development areas and the immediate surroundings of the city. In this context, green space norms are an important tool to meet the environmental, social and economic requirements of urban areas and improve the quality of life (Ersoy, 2009).

PARKS

Parks are large open green spaces, usually located in urban or rural areas, carefully landscaped and based on the principles of landscape architecture. These areas are characterized by a variety of vegetation, trees, flower gardens, water features and other landscape elements. Parks are generally open to public use and are areas designed for recreation, relaxation, sporting events, cultural events and interaction with nature. Parks; These are urban recreation areas located between different functions of the urban fabric (housing, industry, commerce, education, etc.) and serving as important areas for urban recreation and entertainment. This definition emphasizes that parks are an indispensable part of urban life and play an important role in meeting various social needs. Parks can reduce stress, encourage physical activity, and strengthen community ties by allowing city dwellers to connect with nature (Uzun, 1987).

Standards of Parks

Today, individuals living in a modern urban environment generally benefit from the limited opportunity to go out of their urban living spaces. This situation arises due to the density of urban spaces, transportation restrictions and the fast pace of daily life. In addition, these intense living conditions in cities often cause individuals to be forced to stay in their own living environments and make do with these environments.

Planning a city's park areas with the same meticulousness as other urban functions, such as residential and business areas, can be considered an indicator of the cultural and economic richness of that city (Onsekiz and emür, 2008).

Parks should be planned to appeal to all age groups, taking into account the natural and cultural characteristics of cities and offering a wide range of active and passive recreation opportunities.

Parks are urban areas that contribute to the ecological balance of the city, support natural life, create an important interaction area between city residents and nature, and also meet recreational and socio-cultural needs (Erduran and Kabaş, 2010). These parks play a healing role in reducing the negative effects of urban life and supporting people's mental and physical health by reducing environmental stress.

While the ecological role of parks for the city is emphasized in the definition, attention is also drawn to their functions for people's psychological and social needs. Parks encourage social interaction and bring different social groups together, which contributes to the strengthening of social ties and the enrichment of the social fabric of urban life.

CENTRAL PARK

Central Park, which plays an important role in the development of many cities around the world and is one of the leading examples of urban parks, is located in the Manhattan district of New York City, USA. This park was designed to camouflage the ugly appearance of the city and offers people an environment where they can breathe outside of concrete structures. Hosting approximately 40 million visitors annually, Central Park stands out among the most popular urban parks in the USA.

In 1857, the Central Park Commission held a contest to landscape the area. Frederick Law Olmsted, one of the leading names in landscape architecture, and his partner Calvert Vaux also participated in this competition. The "Greensward" project prepared by Olmsted and Vaux was chosen first among 33 participants (www.wikipedia.org).

This small park project, which aims to create resting points and started on the river bank, has achieved success at the highest level in terms of criteria and standards and has risen to a position that challenges traditional urban structuring. Central Park, located in New York City, USA, is a huge forest covering an area of approximately 3400 decares, and this area is equivalent to 5 times the area covered by Topkapı Palace. The park, which gained popularity in the 1870s, was completed and officially opened in 1878.



Figure 1: Central Park, the People's Park (www.amazonaws.com).

Central Park is filled with features that obstruct more than 200 feet of visibility when viewed from any direction. Visitors who want to see the view of the park often encounter rocks, sudden trees, and architectural structures such as the Arsenal, Bandshell, Bethesda Terrace, and Belvedere Castle. Everything observed in Central Park, even natural elements such as the river, was made by human hands. Therefore, Central Park can be considered one of the examples of artificial landscape (www.arkitera.com).

Purpose of Establishment of Central Park and Its Role in the City

The park's original design intent was to reduce congestion in the city center and provide a space for recreation. However, over time, the function of the park has diversified and it has now become a place where people can engage in physical activities, do sports and organize various cultural events. This evolution has enabled the park to become a versatile public space that meets various social needs, rather than just being a recreational area.



Picture 2: Bird's Eye View of Central Park (www.nationalgeographic.com).

Today, parks play an important role in cities by reducing complexity in the city center and reducing social status differences. In addition, by establishing a balance between nature and the city, they play an integrated role in urban life with their design and use. In this context, parks go beyond being just recreation and entertainment areas and play an important role in supporting urban sustainability and social harmony. This evolutionary process has enabled parks to be designed and used for a broader purpose in cities.

With the increasing branding goals of city residents since the 1980s, the role of Central Park has diversified and it has been expected to meet the ecological, psychological, aesthetic, symbolic, political, economic and social needs of the city. Therefore, there are a number of different areas within the park, and each area is designed for a different purpose. These areas include lakes, recreation areas, children's playgrounds and sports areas, zoo, reservoir area, forest areas, walking paths, performance areas and theater areas. This diversity allows Central Park to play a versatile role in urban life.

Today Central Park; In addition to the recreation areas and walking paths, the presence of 21 children's parks contributes to the development of urban culture by bringing people from different cultures, classes and groups together, allowing them to socialize and spend time as a family. If we evaluate it from this perspective, it especially enables immigrants to adapt to the city and immigrant children to come into contact with each other.

On the other hand, one of the important roles of Central Park is to create common consciousness and art culture. Allowing people to experience nature by getting away from the busy pace of the city creates a common consciousness in people. The presence of museums, performance areas and theaters within it contributes to the development of art culture.

In addition to Central Park's contribution to the development of cultural and social ties, it also contributes to people mentally and physically. The fact that the park is isolated from the busy pace and noisy sounds of the city contributes mentally, and the fact that people spend time on the walking paths contributes physically to problems such as unhealthy nutrition and sedentary life, which are the biggest problems of the city.

In addition, the park, built on 3400 decares of land, hosts more than 270 species of birds every year, contributing ecologically to the city. In addition, carbon emissions are reduced thanks to the forest area within it, thus providing a solution to environmental pollution and air pollution problems.

As it is the most visited place in the USA, it became a historical place in 1966, and became the image of the city by being selected to the city's landscape landmark list in 1974, and became the architect of park designs in the USA and many countries by creating the city park style.

CONCLUSION

Urban green areas are important places not only for physical rest and recreational activities, but also for meeting the social and emotional needs of the society. These areas offer environments where people can come together and interact, be in touch with nature and get away from the stress and tension of urban life. Additionally, urban green spaces play a critical role in environmental sustainability and the preservation of ecosystem services.

Large urban green areas such as Central Park ensure that nature continues its existence in the city by showing that cities are not just piles of concrete and asphalt. These parks offer the opportunity to get away from the density and noise of the city and give their visitors the opportunity to take a breath of green. In addition, with various activities and programs, parks bring together various segments of society, strengthen social ties and improve the quality of urban life.

Urban green areas are increasingly important and play a central role in urban planning. Sustainably managing and protecting these areas is critical to ensuring that future generations live in a healthy environment. Therefore, planning, design and maintenance of urban green areas requires a strategic approach for the sustainable development of cities.

REFERENCES

- Alkay, E., ve Ocakçı M., (2003). Kentsel Yeşil Alanların Ekonomik Değerlerinin Ölçülmesinde Kullanılabilecek Yöntemlerin İrdelenmesi, ITU Journal of The Faculty Of Architecture 2(1): 60-68, İstanbul.
- Aydemir, Ş., Erkonak Aydemir, S., Beyazlı, D., Ökten, N., Öksüz, A.M., Sancar, C., ... Aydın Türk, Y. (2004). Kentsel Alanların Planlanması ve Tasarımı. Trabzon: Akademi Kitabevi.
- Çetiner, A. (1976). Kentlerdeki Yeşil Alanlar Korunması ve Geliştirilmesi Sempozyumu, Yerleşmelerde Yeşil Alanlar. İstanbul: Yenilik Basımevi.
- Erduran, F., Kabaş, S., (2010). Parklarda Ekolojik Koşullarla Dengeli, İşlevsel ve Estetik Bitkilendirme İlkelerinin Çanakkale Halk Bahçesi Örneğinde İrdelenmesi, Ekoloji 19, 74, 190-199.
- Ergan, D., (2011). Kentsel Yoksunluk Bağlamında Kentsel Yeşil Alanlar: Osmaniye Örneği. Master's Thesis, Yıldız Technical University, Institute of Science and Technology, Department of City and Regional Planning, p. 160, İstanbul.
- Ersoy, M., (2009). Kentsel Planlamada Arazi Kullanım Standartları, Middle East Technical University Faculty of Architecture Publications, Ankara.
- Ersoy, M., (1994). Kentsel Alan Kullanım Normları, Orta Doğu Teknik Fakültesi Ders Kitabı:48, Adana.
- <http://v3.arkitera.com/h44325-central-park-150-yasinda.html>, Erişim Tarihi: 11.12.2023
- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/where-travel-october-best-destinations>, Erişim Tarihi: 01.04.2024
- <https://s3.amazonaws.com/assets.centralparknyc.org/images/about/history/history-2.jpg>, Erişim Tarihi: 18.12.2023
- https://tr.wikipedia.org/Central_Park, Erişim Tarihi: 01.02.2024
- Keleş, R., (1980). Kent Bilimleri Terimleri Sözlüğü, Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, s. 196, Ankara.
- Keleş, R., (1984). Kentleşme ve Kent Politikası, Ankara University Faculty of Political Sciences Publications, No: 540, Ankara.
- Onsekiz, D. & Emür, S., H. (2008). Kent Parklarında Kullanıcı Tercihleri ve Değerlendirme Ölçütlerinin Belirlenmesi, Journal of Erciyes University Social Sciences Institute, 1(24), 69-105.
- Ter, Ü., (2002). Konya Kenti Açık ve Yeşil Alan Varlığı İçinde Tarihi Kent Merkezinin Kentsel Tasarımı Üzerine Bir Araştırma, PhD Thesis, Ankara University, Institute of Natural and Applied Sciences, Department of Landscape Architecture, p. 291, Ankara.
- Uzun, G., (1987). Kentsel Rekreasyon Alan Planlaması, Çukurova University, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Architecture Publications, Ankara.
- Yuen, B., (1996). Creating The Garden City: The Singapore Experience, Urban Studies, 33, 955-970.