

Transformation and Revitalization of Under-Used or Abandoned Areas

Title: Transformation of former military camp of Pavlos Melas to green park (33Ha)

1. The Problem: Understanding the Space

The former military camp of Pavlos Melas, located in the centre of the municipality, was abandoned in 2005 (already started to fade 10 years ago) and soon the area of 33 Ha became an urban gap. The building stock was deteriorated and in some cases posed threats to the people walking around the area, leaving also space for illegal activities etc.



2. Strategy, Methodology or Approach (How to?)

The redevelopment stems from decades of advocacy by local politicians and associations. While the concession of the site to the Municipality of Pavlos Melas from the Ministry of Defence in 2017 was a turning point, the project reflects the collective effort of multiple stakeholders since the 1990s. The project will be implemented in two phases where the first includes the rehabilitation of the open spaces and the second the restore – reuse of the building stock (in some cases overlap). After extensive conversations with local stakeholders as well as with the ministry of defense, the municipality issued the strategic planning that includes all the directions for the reuse of the area. Afterwards a financial viability study was contacted (feasibility study) that estimates the necessary funds for the projects accruing in order to implement the strategic planning. Stakeholders include: The municipality of Pavlos Melas (granted by ministry of defence), ministry of Defence, Prefectural authority, metropolitan municipalities of Thessaloniki, local associations, citizens, private sector)



3. Results and Impact: The Transformation

The redevelopment of the Metropolitan Park of Pavlos Melas is expected to bring significant positive changes to the area and its community. The intervention is anticipated to increase the value of the area, boost property prices, and improve trust in the local government. The intervention addresses urban challenges such as inadequate spatial planning and limited green spaces. The park integrates various aspects of public policy, including health, air quality, and cultural preservation, contributing to the overall wellbeing of residents. The project will help bring more nature in the city, increase green area per capita, support climate change mitigation – acting as CO2 sink, support soil rehabilitation, reduce air pollution and noise created by the adjacent streets, reduce the “heat island” effect, support biodiversity. The new municipal Hall will be located there along with an archaeological museum – and two more museums (national defence, Greek refuges), an environmental centre, restaurants, incubators, retail stores.



4. Lesson Learned

The Metropolitan Park of Pavlos Melas has provided valuable opportunities for learning across various levels of governance and community engagement. The project has helped address topics such as spatial planning, sustainable urban development, and effective citizen participation. The success of this major urban development project may guide future projects, proving that teamwork, creativity, and long-term planning can lead to great results.



