

# Research on the Design Strategy of Pocket Park from the Perspective of Healthy City

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**Abstract:** Pocket parks are small in size and flexible in function. In the process of urbanization development in China, the number of pocket parks has gradually increased, but from the current point of view, there are many problems in the construction of pocket parks in China. This study conducts a detailed investigation on the plants, sports facilities and roads of the pocket park by adopting the method of on-site investigation of the pocket park. It was found that pocket parks currently have problems such as functional limitations and insufficient ecological design. Therefore, a strategy is proposed to refine the infrastructure of pocket parks and enhance the interactivity of the landscape, so as to promote the high-quality development of pocket parks.

**Keywords :** Health; City; Pocket park; Small green space

With the rapid development of urbanization, the urban population is increasing rapidly, and the high-rise buildings in the city are constantly pouring out. Behind the high-rise buildings also breed a series of urban problems. Due to the lack of urban space resources and the limited area of parks, pocket parks came into being at the historic moment, and many cities began to build pocket parks to provide entertainment and recreation space for surrounding residents. The pocket park starts from the tiny space in the city, and the construction of "pocket park" increases the urban green space, which plays an effective role in alleviating and coordinating in high-density cities<sup>[1]</sup>.

## 1. Definition of concepts related to pocket parks

### 1.1 Healthy City

In 1997, the World Health Organization defined a healthy city as "a city that continuously develops and develops the natural and social environment, and continuously expands social resources, so that people can support each other in enjoying life and realizing their full potential." People's health includes all aspects of physical, psychological and social life. A healthy city is based on the concept of people-oriented, through the planning of urban landscape, space and function, the urban landscape is built into a living environment that can make people feel happy physically and mentally.

### 1.2 Pocket Park

The concept of pocket park was first proposed by American landscape architect Robert Zion in May 1963. Pocket parks, also known as pocket parks, mainly refer to small-scale urban development spaces, which are often scattered in blocks or hidden in cities to serve local residents. The general area of the pocket park is about 1000m<sup>2</sup>, serving people within 5-10 minutes, and serving a population of about 500-1000 people.

## 2. Problems with the status quo of domestic pocket parks

### 2.1 Functional limitations

With the rapid development of society, people's way of life has changed, and the demand for park use has also changed. Nowadays, most people cannot go to traditional city parks due to work reasons, and can only go to parks near their homes<sup>[3]</sup>. The pocket parks around the community carry many functions, and the pocket parks should meet the needs of people in many years. Pocket parks are supposed to be a relaxing gathering place that gives the little ones after school a space to play and socialize. A few seats, a few fitness equipment, so that retired seniors have a simple fitness place. In reality, pocket parks only play a greening role in the city, ignoring their social and artistic functions.

### 2.2 Insufficient ecological design

The practice of pocket parks in many cities does not incorporate the features of the city. The pavement material of the ground is made of impermeable material, and the rainwater does not penetrate into the ground through the material<sup>[4]</sup>. The combination of plants is also not suitable for the local climate characteristics, and cannot create a plant effect with distinct seasons. Many pocket parks lack the necessary management. In the harsh environment, the ecological structure is broken so that the pocket parks cannot attract pedestrians, and soon the parks become new urban wasteland.

## 3. Pocket Park Landscape Design Elements Analysis

### 3.1 Plant configuration

Plants are an essential design element in the park, and the selected plants should be suitable for local tree species. When selecting trees, shrubs and flowers, they should be set reasonably according to the function, form and space size of the pocket park. Large trees have strong shading; lawn green space can enhance the intimacy with people; solitary trees have strong ornamental properties<sup>[5]</sup>.

### 3.2 Public facilities

The public facilities reflect the main functional performance of the pocket park, and the public facilities are set up according to the main functions of the park and the characteristics of the surrounding crowd activities. In the design work, integrate the daily life of urban residents and integrate urban culture. Public facilities are also designed to be ergonomically dimensioned. In addition, we must also pay attention to the barrier-free design of special groups, such as setting up barrier-free passages at the entrances and exits of parks and professional hand-washing stations and toilets for special groups.

### **3.3 Space division**

Although the size of the pocket park is small, it should be powerful. There should be fitness areas in pocket parks for all ages. The types of fitness activities should be diverse and meet fitness activities such as disease, rehabilitation and bodybuilding. Recreational areas are also essential in pocket parks. Communication activities are mainly to promote social health, which can increase children's fitness space. At present, there are many cases of the elderly with children, and the needs of children and the elderly should be considered more in the space division.

## **4. Pocket Park Design Strategies from a Health Perspective**

### **4.1 Refinement of the infrastructure**

Refine the design of all the seats, street lights and structures in the pocket park. Deeply excavate the cultural connotation of the location of the park and create a landscape space rich in life. At the same time, the landscape space can be enriched through landscape walls, sculpture sketches, corridors and hydrophilic platforms, so that the physical form and atmosphere in the space can be integrated. Place prominent signs at the entrance to pocket parks, or add concise, easy-to-understand hand-drawn maps for pedestrians to see.

### **4.2 Enhance the interactivity of the landscape**

Improving the health of pocket parks is all about encouraging people to interact with the landscape through design. According to the theory of environmental psychology, viewing plants or natural landscapes, even natural pictures, can also play a role in promoting health. In the design process, the handling of the pocket park interface should be carefully considered to reduce visual obstacles such as the arrangement of large trees, buildings and walls. The traffic organization is more convenient to connect with the entrances and exits of the surrounding office areas, commercial areas and communities. Referring to the neighborhood planning model of "5min pedestrian zone" and people's walking speed, 500-1000m is a distance that can create good travel and health opportunities, and increase people's opportunities to directly contact the landscape<sup>[6]</sup>.

### **4.3 Encourage people to actively participate**

Encourage active participation and maximize the health benefits of pocket park spaces. In parks that people use more frequently, the concept of horticultural rehabilitation gardens can be considered to improve people's health. In gardens, people will effectively integrate into nature, and integrate into nature and feel nature from the aspects of smell, hearing and touch, which will make people feel more comfortable and relaxed in daily life, and gradually achieve the goal of physical health. The construction of the pocket park emphasizes public participation, including soliciting opinions from the public before planning, participating in the construction during the construction and maintaining and managing it after it is put into use, so as to realize the healthy and circular development of the pocket park.

## **5. Conclusion**

To sum up, the design of pocket park is not a simple landscape design, it is related to people's health and the development of the city, we should pay attention to every design procedure and design details. In the context of the current era, it is particularly important to create a healthy, green and comfortable urban environment. In response to the existing problems of pocket parks, corresponding design strategies are proposed, and the healthy functions and benefits of pocket parks are presented from different angles to promote the sustainable development of the city.

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