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MOSCOW LANDSCAPE PLANNING STRATEGY

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"To Grow Green Wedges Back"

Nowadays, in spite of rapid development of internet and modern technologies recreational areas within the city remain necessary and ever popular public spaces. According to poll results the amount of greenery is one of the key factor forming people's perception of city public area. Also, landscape system is crucial for city functioning as it defines ecological and sanitary norms of the city environment. It is especially true for the current period of ecological problems.

Currently there are two main problems in the key parts of Moscow landscape strategy, which are the following:

- inaccessibility of Moscow embankments - mainly at the central and South-Eastern part of the city, as well as the lack of walking areas along the riverbanks at the central part of the city - over 35% of Moscow embankments out of 180km of Moscow embankment total length are currently being blocked by industrial areas. Additionally, the rapid increase in traffic intensity of recent years made substantial shift in the city spaces perception. Consequently, walking routes along the roads that constitute 92% of the embankment length within the Garden Ring could not be perceived as city recreational area and thus is ineffectively used.
- lack of green areas at the central part of the city. Moscow is considered to be one of the most green cities among the World metropolises due to the index of green areas per person which is calculated with a sum of all Moscow green areas including large parklands at the city borders. However, the amount of greenery per person in the central part of Moscow is 4.8m², whereas 8m² is considered as minimum by the World Health Organization.

At the state of transitions Moscow is currently undergoing 80% of industrial territories are being removed from the city center. It would potentially open up 35% of the city embankments and bring the opportunity of new parks creation. Therefore, there is a high demand in introducing a coordinated multi-disciplinary Moscow Landscape Strategy, before the former industrial territories are being built up.

Lack of linear parks in the center of the city and inaccessibility of central Moscow embankments are acknowledged to be problematic issues both by professional architectural community as well as by general public. During the recent years several concepts were made at a subject of Moscow river embankment territories transformation as well as it is formulated as a key point in the 2010 masterplan strategy. Numerous projects of the kind were recently realized in Europe proving the question to be crucial for many other cities.

Research aims to explore what Moscow Green Wedges 2011 Strategy should comprise of in the current period of market economy in terms of architectural and urban planning vision, transport regulations, management, as well as land use and land survey mechanisms.

Work contents:

- Moscow Landscape Planning Strategies of the XX-th century studied through Moscow masterplans
- Current state of Moscow parks and embankments system, existing visionary concepts and 2010 masterplan Landscape Strategy
- Moscow Landscape Planning Strategy 2011

Historical analysis

80% of Moscow territories were formed during the XX-th century. Over 60% of the present Moscow territory are being built up with microrayons as the result of 160% implementation of 1960-s mass housing strategy.

History of Moscow from 1920-s to the Present could be divided into four historical periods: period of Russian Avant-garde (1920-1935), Stalinistic period of representation (1935-1954), Post- Stalinistic period of "struggle with architectural excesses" (1954-1989) and the current Post-Perestroika period of transition to market economy (1989 - Present). Each of these periods was characterized by different political ideology which affected architectural visions of the city and defined Moscow architectural portrait of nowadays.

The October Revolution consequence of destroying property right resulted in a specific centralized governmental planning mechanism characteristic to entire Soviet Period. Planning process became less of a regulative whereas more of a visionary discipline.

During the Russian avant-garde period which followed the October Revolution key political idea of the time could have been formulated as collective good. The first Soviet masterplan was "New Moscow" plan made in 1923 by A. Shusev. At the base of it was the idea of future development of Moscow as a garden city. This masterplan was followed by the "Greater Moscow" masterplan made by Shestakov, where the future Moscow was envisioned as an urban agglomeration occupying the territory which exceeds the present size of Moscow.

However, the masterplans of the 1920-s were not implemented into reality as the garden city concept they were referring to was considered unable to answer the demands of the time. Therefore, international contest for Moscow masterplan was held at the end of the 1920-s. Based on the contest results a group of Soviet architects started developing Moscow planning strategies. These strategies partly became implemented at the beginning of the 1930-s. In 1935 the masterplan by Semenov and Chernishov was accepted. At the base of it was put the idea of a centralized ideal Sun city, which should form a new representative image of Moscow as a capital of the New Soviet Country. The spacious organization of the city was defined by hierarchy from the center to periphery.

After the death of Stalin in 1953 and the decree of "architectural excesses struggle" of 1954 started the period of industrialization in the Soviet architecture started. It was characterized by relative openness towards Western culture and the idea of ecological city as the central principle for planning. The vision of ecological city was put at the base of 1971 masterplan made by M. Posokhin. According to this masterplan Moscow was divided into several zones organised around zone public centres and connected with each other by green areas.

Whereas the 1989 masterplan was in many ways based on the ideas of the preceding period, the masterplan of 1995-2005, which was called the "masterplan of opportunities" formulated the principle of getting maximum profits out of the city territory, which resulted in unpredictability of Moscow architectural layout. The masterplan which was accepted in 2010 is called the "masterplan of necessities". It aims to resolve the problems initiated by the preceding period of radical shifts.



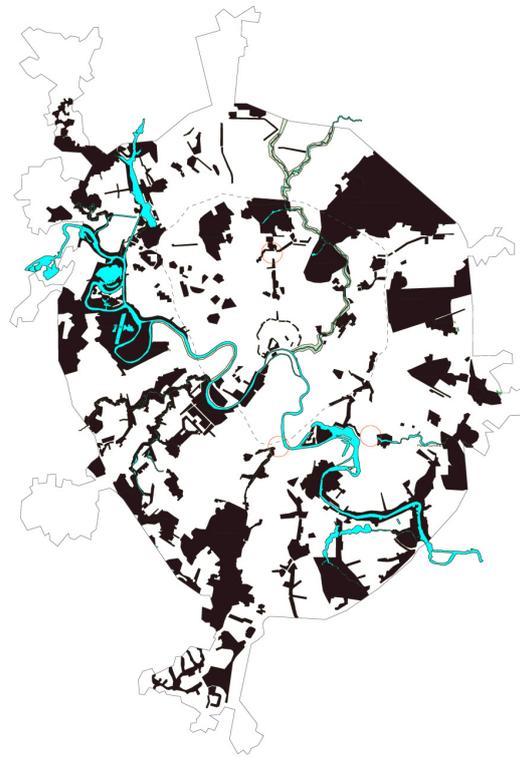
1923 masterplan by Shusev and Zholtovskii
"New Moscow"



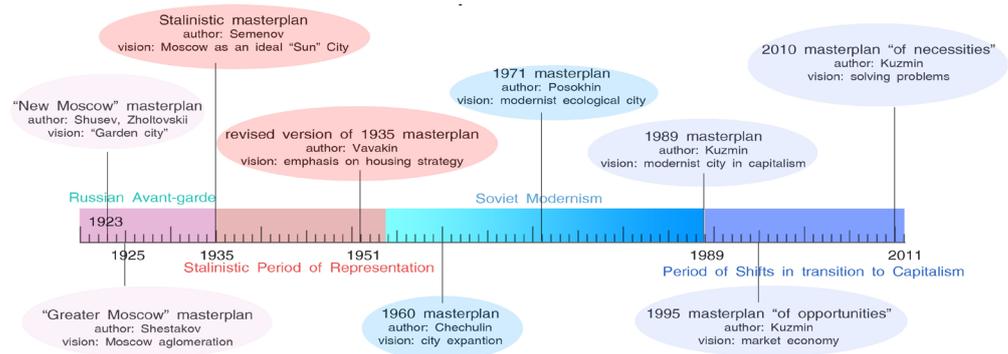
1935 masterplan by Semenov and Cherniishov:



1923 masterplan by Posokhin



2010 masterplan "of necessities" by Kuzmin



Moscow Greenery Planning Strategy key idea remained consistent throughout the XX-th century: to create Green Belt around Moscow connected to the center of the city by Green Wedges in a way that landscape areas form a permeable structure through the city fabrics.

" to encircle (Moscow) by a 2 verst width circle of greenery, meanwhile, using the existing voids, cemeteries, private and public gardens and boulevards - to cut in the direction of the city center several green wedges in order to "enhealth" the city center". (Shusev A, "New Moscow", 1923)

" To create forest park protective green circle at the radius of 10 km, which should be comprised of evenly situated forest massives...To connect these green massives with the city center ..."
(SNK and CC VKP(b) resolution of 10 July 1935)

"...the unity is achieved by elaboration of already formed star-like city plan construction and of development of the system of green wedges penetrating deeply into urban fabrics..."
(Posokhin M, "Construction and Architecture" 1971, #3)

"...recreation of connectivity of "green wedges" of the city at the basis of rehabilitation of small rivers system and developing of built-up territories green area"
(masterplan 2010 territories planning, 3.2.9)

Moscow Rivers Embankment current state was shaped in different historical periods. Industrial areas situated along the riverbanks mainly in the South - Eastern part of the city were formed during the period from the foundation of the city to the beginning of the XX-th century, when the river surface was considered one of the main transport routes.

"The embankments are served by railroads and are built up with regular rows of warehouses with automatic cranes"
(Shusev A, "New Moscow", "Red Niva", Moscow 1923)

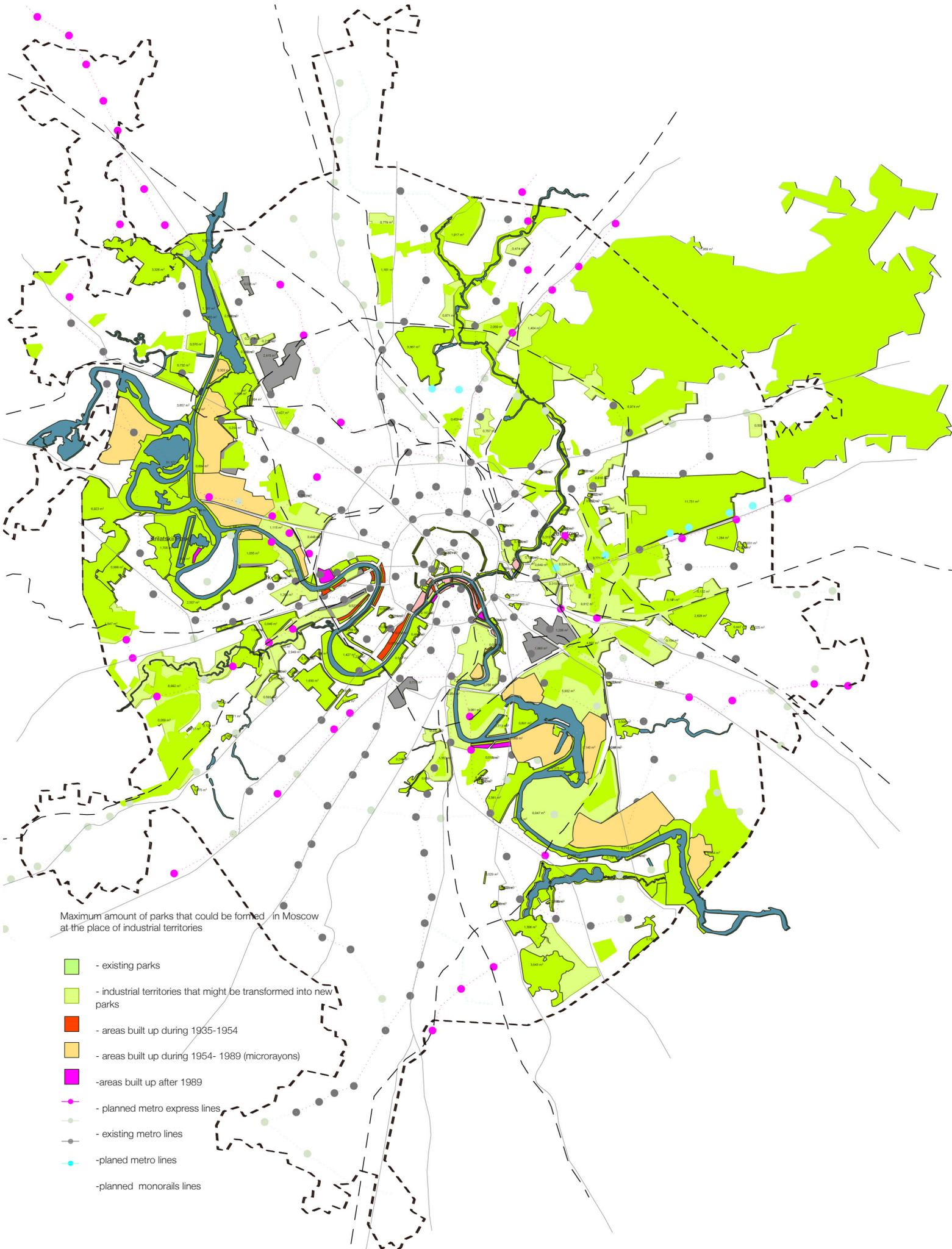
Central granite embankments of Moskva and partly Jauza rivers were designed with traffic roads going along the riverfront - it was the implementation of the idea formulated in 1935 masterplan. However at the beginning it was still possible to use embankments as walking areas as the traffic along the roads was not highly intensive. Nowadays, however, due to the rapid increase of recent years in the traffic intensity, Moscow central embankments could not be considered city recreational areas.

" To transform Moskva river embankments into the main traffic routes of the city altogether with lining of the riversides with granite and creation of wide transport routes with transit traffic all along them"
(SNK and CC VKP(b) resolution of 10 July 1935)

During the Post-Stalinistic period of shift towards modernism, the focus in Moscow planning strategy was put mainly on construction of new housing areas. The embankments in the newly built neighbourhoods were designed as recreational areas which, due to the periphery sites location were used mainly by local residents.

"...into the zone center should be included a wide boulevard along the Moskva river at the area of Pechatniki and the neighbouring public buildings"
(Posokhin M, "Construction and Architecture" 1971, #3)

In the Post-Perestroika newly built areas the vision of the preceding period of riverbank as a park area was followed.



Maximum amount of parks that could be formed in Moscow at the place of industrial territories

- existing parks
- industrial territories that might be transformed into new parks
- areas built up during 1935-1954
- areas built up during 1954- 1989 (microrayons)
- areas built up after 1989
- planned metro express lines
- existing metro lines
- planned metro lines
- planned monorails lines

Moscow Landscape Planning Strategy 2011

Overall vision: To create green walking areas along Moscow rivers (following the traditional Moscow Landscape Planning Key Idea of the XX-th century which is being present in the 2010 masterplan)

Program aim: rather than focus on territorial zoning - to create a multidisciplinary program which would become a mechanism for generating working solutions in such co-related fields, as economy, urban design, land survey, sociology etc and to foster communication between all the involved parties

Program directions:

1. Project Management:

- to identify all organizations responsible for planning transport, infrastructure and greenery at Moscow rivers and riverbanks and to propose a coordinated strategy (reference: urban planning management models of Copenhagen and London)

"The whole economics of urban life is no longer an isolated piece of Real estate but a whole sequences of resources which move through sites: energy, water, communication, people, knowledge etc bindled into a larger acquisition" (David Barry, "Creative Cities" program)

"...do small projects, but try to find big infrastructure in which you could connect those projects to do a bigger thing" (David Barry, "Creative Cities" program)

"In traditional planning you always have traffic planners dealing with traffic, you had someone taking care of the green and the parks and someone doing the buildings... in Copenhagen we now sit down once a month ... so we have people from traffic , we have people from parks, we have people from squares... and we discuss the new projects that are going to be implemented in Copenghagen so that everybody know what is the vision behind the project" (Kristian Villadsen , Gehl Architects)

2. Urban Design (Visionary Concept +Territory planning /Transport):

- to classify Moscow embankments of different types and to form a visionary concept of riverbanks development including the greenery strategy for the surrounding areas
- to identify key sites, that should be transformed first
- to focus on possible transport schemes

3. Land Use and Land Survey:

- to implement a legislative mechanism of motivation for land owners encouraging creation of parks and walking areas
(reference: Chicago Riverwalk model)
- to implement mechanisms of encouraging investments into large scale city public space programs (reference: Paris city embankments strategy)

Urban design. Visionary Concept +Territory planning/transport schemes:

1. Transport schemes:

- to create floating walking areas at the expense of the river width (reference:"Moskva River in Moscow" contest)
- to introduce congestion charge: (reference: Paris, Copenghagen)
- to put existing transport routes underground (reference: Madrid)
- to improve public transport of the area

2. Territory planning:

- to introduce new functions to the adjacent territories by means of planning and survey projects

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