



# Open Space, Recreation and Sport Facilities Development Guidelines

(Community-based Open Space, Recreational and Sport Facilities )



الخطة العمرانية

QATAR  
NATIONAL  
MASTER  
PLAN

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## Open Space, Recreational and Sport Facilities Development Guidelines

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Parks and recreation areas are essential to ensure adequate human living conditions. The Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) mentions that a key goal is to have “nature and man in harmony”. Parks and open space take an important role in realizing this vision. Moreover, out of the Four Pillars presented in the QNV2030, parks and open space contribute in emphasizing three pillars as follows: Human Development, Social Development, and Environmental Development. Pressure for land is extreme in Qatar especially within MD and it must be recognized that there are competing demands for land. However, QNDF acknowledges that open space and recreation facilities stems from a basic human need for activities which are essential to the mental and physical well-being of the individual and the community as a whole. It therefore encourages and seeks to ensure that appropriate opportunities are available to meet the needs of the people.

The project is intended to provide a framework and guidance for the provision of the community-based open space and Recreation facilities in Qatar. The IOSRFDG is a blueprint to assist the municipality spatial development plans to deal with the provision of open space and recreation facilities all over the municipalities and especially within the urban centers in addition to assisting MMUP to deal with the development control daily applications of the community – based open space and recreational facilities .

#### 1.2 SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The planning standards and guidelines set out later in this section have been formulated to provide an equitable basis for the reservation of land for recreation facilities and open space; and to guide the planning, distribution and, where appropriate, design of these facilities. There are two sets of standards set out later in this section, namely one for public parks and open space based on a range of population thresholds, and the other for recreation facilities based on the planning levels. These two sets of standards are applied simultaneously in planning work.

The standards set targets which may not be achieved all at once or uniformly throughout the country. Areas of new development should be planned to meet the standards, whereas old, developed areas should be planned to pursue incremental improvements towards the standards through such means such as urban renewal.

The purpose of this document is to provide information to support the master plans in providing a world-class system of open space and recreation for the entire population and the greening of the urban environment.

#### 1.3 CORRELATION WITH QNDF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This Report takes into consideration the correlation to the guiding principles as developed for the QNMP correlated to open space and Recreation. The following points of references required more emphasis:

- **Sustainability:** Open spaces, while remaining with a specific use, can be considered as a reserve for future use according to demand.
- **Quality of Life for All:** In light of rapid economic growth and urban intensification, the assurance to allocate sufficient open spaces for long term should be guaranteed, to assure the need of human scale user-friendly urban environment.
- **Identity:** The proposed uses of open spaces for the demonstration of desert and marine life patterns such as integration of archeological sites, outdoor recreational activities within recreational land resources; and safeguarding typical water front and port landscape, all further enhance the link between Qatari Culture and Nature.
- **Environmental Values:** In addition to the direct protection and conservation of environmental values through the open

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space and Recreation, additional major outputs are:

- (a) Increasing the environmental values of the natural areas to be allocated as “managed” open spaces. Such “well naturally managed” allocation would affect their natural uniqueness, but rather enhance their environmental significance and value;
  - (b) Raise the environmental awareness of the open space users who will enjoy, protect and adhere to the significance of the national natural environment.
- **Connectivity of People and Places:** Different levels of parks, plazas and other open spaces are vital for social interaction, gathering and communication and to consolidate of the sense of belonging. The allocation, spatial and landscape design of these spaces will respond to the following needs:
    - (a) To control the spatial inhibition that may result from over urban development;
    - (b) To enhance a community friendly spatial design versus an individual housing isolation design;
    - (c) To allow for harmonious and healthy multicultural encountering;
    - (d) To create an authentic outdoor living space versus the domination of artificial “air conditioned” space;
    - (e) To find adapted creative solutions allowing outdoor presence during harsh weather seasons;
    - (f) To strengthen the interactive connectivity between inland and sea, consolidating as such the Qatari dual united identity.
  - **Economic Growth and Diversification:** Parks, recreation and other open spaces should be allocated and designed as a support instrument of Qatar’s economic growth, as first it add to the economic value of the real estate development and attract to this market affluent expatriates and families who value environmental excellence.
  - **Ownership in Planning and Implementation:** It is recommended for open space and recreation facilities to be provided in a collaborative manner between MMUP and all concerned agencies and to initiate community participation actions in planning, by inviting participants to take part in the relatively pleasant task of designing parks and plazas, noting that this is an easy and a unifier topic to discuss, and can be done through existing community centers

### 1.4 KEY ISSUES

#### 1.4.1 Unbalanced Distribution of Parks

Qatar parks are not distributed in relationship to the population. According to estimates of walking distance<sup>1</sup> coverage (catchment area), only 17.2% of Metropolitan Doha’s population has a park within walking distance. This situation is further compromised by the differing user demands of each catchment area.

Setting out the standards for parks and open space and walking distances are needed to achieve equitable distribution for all sections of the community.

#### 1.4.2 Open Space as Gathering Space

Open spaces are important multi-functional areas for all people, and should reflect local lifestyles and traditions. Diverse ranges of activities for all age groups should be allowed in open spaces whenever and wherever possible. Variations in open spaces, especially plazas, are very important in the urban area for daily and periodic visits as well as places for assembly of people.

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<sup>1</sup> Walking distances used here are 400m for local park and 250m for Neighborhood Park. Five minutes’ walk, about 400m, has been adopted as a distance comfortable for most people to walk. 250m distance for arid climate.

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Open spaces in Downtown Doha act as gathering sites for single male workers at the weekend as such areas are not provided where they live, and they are excluded from other areas of open space. However these open spaces are poorly connected to the open spaces along the Corniche.

### 1.4.3 Relationship with Local Planning

Most existing parks are not located with other community facilities such as mosques, shops, schools and kindergartens etc. Open space has the potential to upgrade the quality of community services and utilize the land value when planned and located together.

Neighborhood parks play a fundamental role in people's daily life and can be used as a core unit of planning. They should be located with good accessibility and located close to key neighborhood facilities.

### 1.4.4 Open Space Network

The existing parks and open spaces in Qatar are not well connected with each other or with the pedestrian networks and only a few walking paths exist. This is largely due to the low priority given to pedestrian amenities and the climate during the summer.

However, many people are now enjoying walking along the Corniche and the footpaths of the Green Network in Zones 45 and 47 and other public parks, even during the summer months. The National Health Authority recommends people walk to enhance their health: the accessibility, safety and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment will greatly influence the number of participants.

A comprehensive green network is a fundamental component of the future park standards and overall network should be developed. These networks provide multi-functional benefits for the urban context, as alternative transport routes for residents and as climate mitigation devices.

### 1.4.5 Variety of Parks

Most of the existing parks consist of plain lawn field areas and some children's playgrounds. More variety of both passive and active recreation in parks is needed.

### 1.4.6 Responsibility for Parks Planning

Several authorities/agencies are involved in the process of planning, designing, constructing and maintaining parks and public gardens. Related agencies (e.g. PEO, QOC, QMA, QOC), Public Gardens Department of the MMUP, the Public Garden Section of Municipalities and the UPD are involved in the planning process. The Public Garden Section of each Municipality is responsible for the maintenance after handing over.

It is recommended that clear process and collaboration system for planning, design, implementation, management and maintenance should be established.

### 1.4.7 Traffic and Recreation Facilities

Serious traffic congestion was observed around recreational facilities when major events are held, because of the concentration of private vehicles before and after the tournaments. Recreation facilities should be well served by public transportation. Where difficulties occur with the linking of facilities to mass transportation system, bus services should be provided.



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### 1.4.8 Insufficient Public Sports Facilities

Most sports stadium facilities and clubs are mainly for professionals or high caliber athletes, and are restricted to club members. The semi-public and private sectors provide several sports venues such as golf courses, sports gyms, tennis and squash courts, which are restricted to members. To enhance people's participation in sports activities, it is important to provide more facilities assigned for open public use.

### 1.5 LOCAL TRENDS

"Family days" and "Ladies day" are provided by the Municipality to provide a secure and secluded environment for families (children and women groups). On the other hand, single male workers often have no place to go. It is important to also secure accessible places for single male workers.

As anticipated with the improvement of MICE, it is expected that many foreigners will make short term visits and thus demands for facilities for short-term visitors will increase accordingly. Many of their needs will be covered where they are staying in hotels and serviced apartments e.g. swimming pools, gyms, courts etc. But they may also want more passive open space around the place of interest.

"Majlis" are very important meeting places for all generations. There are male majlis and female majlis. Spending time with friends, relatives and family is a very important cultural recreational activity.

Many people picnic with their family in parks, as observed in Al Rumaila Park, the Corniche and Dahl Al Hamam Park. During the summer season and the holy month of Ramadan, picnics often carry on past sunset, often until midnight. Wi-Fi connection service is provided in major parks where young people bring their laptop computers and enjoy outdoor web surfing. Picnic facilities should be provided wherever possible (such as outdoor tables, water taps etc).

Running and walking along the Corniche are popular activities, as well as Aspire Park and around neighborhoods where footpaths are provided. It is not only waterfront areas but footpaths and walkable environments should be provided to support this trend.

#### 1.5.1 Users Profile

**Young people and children:** Summer school holidays are long for children in Qatar and therefore activities to occupy their time are required. This is to be taken into consideration while allowing for measures to accommodate harsh weather conditions.

**Elderly people:** To secure accessibility and safety for elderly people to participate in recreation programs, there needs to be special incentives or facilitation, such as a transport service, wheel chairs, and special safety design standards. There is a need in Qatar to enhance the attraction of recreational activities among the elderly.

**Women:** Due to a lack of facilities exclusively provided for women, Ladies Parks are normally overcrowded. Muntazah Park which is currently under maintenance that used to have a fenced area for ladies.

**Persons with special needs:** Recreational program for persons with special needs is critical given the relative isolation of adults and children with special needs. Specially-adapted facilities should be provided wherever possible.

**Expatriates:** High-income expatriates have the opportunity to join several accessible facilities and activities such as desert safaris, diving, and marine sports outside the city area and are relatively well served in relation to other user groups in Qatar. The capacity of the activities should be increased and variety of activities should be widened to accommodate increasing demand and to ensure that Qatar can compete with neighboring Gulf cities in the context of quality of life offerings.

Some indoor shopping malls have sports courts. Shoppers can enjoy watching games whilst at the same time players can benefit from the feedback from spectators. There are no specific facilities for single male workers to

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spend their leisure time. Open space and facilities should be provided near where they live. In addition, assembly points and resting areas should be provided in the Downtown area and urban centers where people can meet each other.



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### 2.0 PUBLIC PARKS AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Parks and open spaces are fundamental elements of the urban fabric that help define spaces and contribute to the quality of the environment, as well as social and economic aspects of sustainability. Open spaces have the potential to accentuate the visual image of a country, creating places where people want to live, work and visit.

Clear standards can help facilitate and provide an equitable basis for the reservation of land for parks and recreation facilities and to guide the planning, distribution and design of these facilities. The standards play an important role in addressing a diverse range of community needs in harmony with various planning aspects and urban design considerations.

In Qatar there is currently no rational distribution of parks, recreation and open spaces, as the standards were introduced in 1987 and 1996 and are now outdated.

According to the QNV 2030 the four pillars of human, social, economic and environmental development are crucial to enable Qatar to increase its potential to become an attractive and livable country. Unified and flexible standards that match the Vision are required so that the future development of Qatar can be on a par with world-class cities.

Standards should take into account population densities, catchment populations and distance, and availability of water, etc. Once these standards have land truthing, the impact on various aspects of Qatar's quality of life will need to be considered, including:

- **Urban renaissance and regeneration:** Parks and open spaces can contribute to regeneration and renewal projects, enhancing neighborhoods image by establishing a local sense of identity and belonging
- **Health and physical activity:** Parks and open spaces can promote contact with people and the environment, and provide places for walking, cycling and other physical activities
- **Education and lifelong learning:** Parks and open spaces can be used as outdoor classrooms for all ages and interests for informal interactive learning experiences
- **Social justice and community development:** Parks and open spaces can promote social inclusion by providing 'something for everyone', equal opportunities for all ages, genders, abilities and race, and
- **Environment and ecology:** Parks and open spaces can provide habitats of high value that increase biodiversity and sustainability of urban areas.

#### 2.1 METHODOLOGY FOR STANDARDS SETTING

The methodology for identifying standards for the provision of public parks and recreation in Qatar is based upon an assessment of existing conditions and an inventory of parks in Qatar, examination of several international examples and gulf countries have been assessed and procedures to ensure standards are flexible, accurate and applicable. The standards have been established and considered through the following steps:

- **Step 1: Assessment of existing conditions:** a quantitative and qualitative review of the current inventory of parks and recreation facilities and their distribution was conducted. The analysis examined the strength and weaknesses of the existing situation and translated these into specific requirements to support diversified cultural and social groups as well as location constraints
- **Step 2: Review of the evolution of Qatar's standards from 1987 to 1996:** parks and recreation standards released in March 1987 by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs as well as park standards established in September 1996 have been evaluated.

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- **Step 3: Review examples from Gulf countries as comparable guides:** in order to evaluate Qatar's parks and recreation standards, it was necessary to consider other Gulf countries standards, which share similar natural, climatic and cultural conditions. Public parks and recreation standards for all Gulf countries have been assessed as comparable guides
- **Step 4: Identify best practice examples from world-class countries as benchmarks:** best practice examples of world class cities have been considered as benchmarks so that Qatar can aim towards improving its quality of life offerings
- **Step 5: Comparison of Qatar's current parks and recreation standards against both Gulf countries and world class cities standards to provide a benchmark for Qatar:** it is necessary to benchmark Qatar through comparing its current parks and recreation standards with both Gulf and world class cities in terms of categorization of relevant planning levels, catchment populations and distances for each category
- **Step 6: Establish open space categorizations and standards through review of key lessons from benchmark and deficiencies of the existing condition:** the proposed standards for parks and recreation facilities established from key lessons of benchmarking, taking into account the unique physical and cultural conditions of Qatar.

### 2.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STANDARDS SETTING

The success of standards can be defined by the level of satisfied users and efficient usage. The following criteria are considered as guiding principles for open space and recreation provision:

- **Identity:** tailor-made to Qatar to reflect Qataris' aspirations, development opportunities and constraints
- **Aligned with other policy agendas:** such as the community facilities plan, the spatial strategy, environmental management plan and movement strategy
- **Practicality:** they should be simple enough to be understood by all and applied. They should be flexible enough to handle unanticipated situations and the rapidly changing development landscape
- **Relevance:** they should imitate the needs and lifestyle requirement of current and future generations
- **People orientation:** they should provide a focus for community life. They should emphasize the quality of open space, rather than only quantity
- **Feasibility:** they should be attainable within a reasonable time frame in accordance with available irrigation and funding sources
- **Well integrated into development plans:** the development control process should recognize that open space provides an essential part of community infrastructure and that this, in part, is sustained through development and appropriate planning mechanisms
- **Recognizes the differences in open space characteristics:** the role of each open space type, the community served and the nature of the location should reflect planning levels and strategies.

### 2.3 OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY AND TYPES OF STANDARDS

Three types of standards based on quality, quantity and accessibility are summarized as follows:

- **Qualitative standards:** a benchmark against which quality can be measured; difficulties in developing quality standards should be recognized due to the diverse function and variety of open spaces. Therefore, standards should take the form of guidance

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- **Quantitative standards:** an amount of open space per unit or per capita can be quantified to allow stakeholders and developers to provide sufficient levels of open space provision to service the proposed population, and
- **Accessibility standards:** an amount of particular types of open space within a specified distance, providing reasonable distance thresholds for open space provision. The accessibility of open spaces should be clearly established and applied.

Quantity and accessibility standards are inter-linked. If a settlement of low density population has achieved its accessibility targets, then it may also achieve quantity standards. Those areas with high density population may be insufficient in terms of quantity.

Table 1 Clarifies open space typologies and land use classification relevant to standard types.



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**Table 1 : Open Space Typology with Appropriate Standards Types**

Typology		Description	Classification	Qualitative Standards	Quantitative Standards	Accessibility Standards
Public parks		Areas of land normally enclosed, designed, constructed, managed and maintained as public parks or gardens. These may be owned or managed by community groups. Parks could include playgrounds.	Public parks and garden	✓	✓	✓
Amenity green space		Landscaped areas provide visual amenity by separating different buildings and land uses for environmental, visual or safety reasons and use for a variety of informal or social activities such as sunbathing, picnics etc.	Amenity - Residential Amenity - Business Amenity	Standards may be difficult to set without constraining urban context and innovation.		
Sports oriented spaces	Playground	Areas providing safe and accessible opportunities for children's play are typically linked to housing areas or public parks.	Playground	✓	✓	✓
	Sports areas	Large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces, used primarily for designated sports (including playing fields, golf courses and tennis courts) and which are generally bookable.	Playing field Golf course Tennis court Basketball court Football court Cricket court Other sports fields	Demand-led assessment by the Qatar Olympic Committee is more relevant.		
Green corridors		Routes including roads, wadis corridors linking different areas within a town or city as part of a designated and managed network and used for walking, cycling or horse riding, or linking towns and cities to the surrounding countryside or parks. These may link green spaces together.	Green route Seaside route Linear Park	✓	Provision is depend on existing features	
Natural/semi natural space		Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with residual natural habitats or which have been planted or colonized by vegetation and wildlife, including desert.	Desert land within city limit Naturally vegetated land Open water	Provision is depend on existing features		
Civic Space		Squares, streets and waterfront promenades, predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and can make connections for people and for wildlife.	Urban plaza Civic space	✓	Provision is depend on existing features	

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### 2.4 PROPOSED HIERARCHY AND CATEGORIES OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Currently, there is no distinction between parks or gardens, and there is no distinction between public and private categorization. There is also confusion in the differentiation between types and categories of park and recreation facilities. The communities served by park and recreation facilities are not well specified. All this leads to a subsequent confusion in the level of planning for these facilities.

In light of the above, the following is recommended (ref Table 2):

- To apply a clear yet diversified planning structure
- To link the facilities classification to the community that it serves..

Setting categories of parks shall be followed in relation to the proposed planning levels.

**Table 2: Summary of Proposed Categories for Parks**

Planning Level	Category	Description
National level	National Level Park	National parks express national status and dignity; commemorate a prime place of national interest; or are designated for special interests. In the Qatar context, a zoo, botanical garden and desert park can be considered as a national park. National parks represent the interests and values of the people of the country, both residing within the area adjacent to the national park and to those who visit it from all over the country.
Metropolitan District/ Municipality	Metropolitan Park/ Municipality Park	A metropolitan park enhances regional identity and serves as an integrated leisure venue within each regional administrative area.
Urban District	Town /City Park	A town/city park is a multi-functional park that provides a relatively wide range of leisure and sports activities. The park uses may focus on specific community needs such as cultural identity related events etc. The park's role in servicing varied types of demand and ad-hoc programming of events would increase the residents' enjoyment of the park via a variety of experiences.
Local District	District Park	A district park provides the same type of facilities and services for a collection of neighborhoods, yet on a larger scale and commonly with additional features that meet the expanding recreational needs and/or facilities that are not provided at the local or neighborhood park level.
Local Area	Local Park	A local park serves as social and recreational focal points for the local district. Leisure or active recreation is set according to the demographic and cultural characteristics of the served local district. The local park is easily accessible by foot and bicycle and located within 400m from any residence. It can be designed as fenced for the use of families (family only park) or as open to encourage public usage.
Neighborhood	Neighborhood Park	A neighborhood park is designed to provide active and leisure (limited in time and diversity) activities in the vicinity of a household. A daily Mosque covers the same catchment area.
N/A	Urban Plaza	An urban plaza provides a free pedestrian space for gathering, resting and strolling. It is designed in accordance with other pedestrian spaces and other public and private sectors facilities (such as Souks and Malls). In areas where there is a concentration of high-rise buildings, mostly office spaces, urban plazas are much needed, as they are not often included in the original development. Close coordination with owners and stakeholders are be required to create these spaces.
N/A	Special Provision for Workers	The above categorization assumes the use of parks by all residents living within the serviced areas. In the case of large areas accommodating workers (such as commercial and industrial areas), additional categorized facilities are proposed, reflecting the special needs of this group of people (such as playgrounds, gathering areas and outdoor activities).
N/A	Linear Park	A park that is much longer than wide. Linear parks make use of strips of public land next to shorelines, canals, electrical lines, and highways. Walking, jogging, cycling, horseback riding may be enjoyed in traffic free environment. Benches, shelters, toilets, drinking fountains, kiosks shall be provided. If there are deficiencies in children play and informal sports fields in the vicinity, these facilities could be provided in linear parks.

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### 2.5 INTERIM PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES STANDARDS

#### Defining a National Minimum Standards for parks and open space

National minimum standards are necessary to establish the potential scope of application and level of provision. Minimum standards should be provided to ensure open space is provided for all development types. This study recommends that open space standards should be extended to residential, employment, leisure, retail and other developments. The standards should form part of the master planning and development control process and should be structured to relate to the nature of development.

Given the unique social customs and traditions of Qatar's community, there are family parks, ladies and children parks and dedicated days for use by specific groups. This helps to identify appropriate users for types of parks, taking into account the community served and planning level requirements.

The proposed minimum and standard size of park categories in relation to suitable uses are shown in Table 3.6.1. These Interim Standards need to be assessed within a Metropolitan Doha Comprehensive Assessment Study (including an Implementation Strategy for land acquisition and developer contributions).

**Table 3: Standards & Guidelines for the Provision of Public Parks**

Catchment Level		National	Metropolitan	Town	District	Local	Neighborhood
<b>Facility</b>		National Level Park	Metropolitan/ Municipality Park	Town Park	District Park	Local Park	Neighborhood Park
<b>Planning Criteria (Pop.Served)</b>		2 million+	100,000-300,000	50,000-100,000	30,000-50,000	3,000 with Catchment Radius<400m	1,200 with Catchment Radius < 250m
<b>Site Area Range (ha)</b>		N/A	60 - 200	5 -15	2 - 5	0.4 - 2	0.1 - 0.25
<b>Type of Use</b>	<b>Use Purpose</b>	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Multi-Purpose	Single-Purpose	Amenity Purpose
	<b>Public</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Local Use
	<b>Family Only</b>	Specific Days	Specific Days	✓	✓	✓	N/A
	<b>Woman Only</b>	Segregated Area	Segregated Area	Segregated Area	Segregated Area	✓	N/A
	<b>Children Play Area</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<b>Sports Facilities</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A

### 3.0 RECREATIONAL AND SPORTS FACILITIES STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Along with education, economic investment and diversification, sport is a central element in Qatar's vision of the future development of the country. The importance of sport is evident in the fact that Qatar holds numerous prestigious international sporting events every year, including the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Championships, the World Indoor Athletics, the Asian Cup, the Men's Handball World Championship, the Asian Indoor Games, the FIFA World Cup and many more. Through several different events, initiatives and organizations, Qatar has grown to a global player in the sports industry. Major events and high-performance sports offer a great platform to position Qatar on the map and present the capability of the country. Still, the government recognizes the importance of sports for the Qatari society. While major events are an important factor helping to create a higher interest in sports itself and create idols for the youth; the focus on high-performance sports alone does not directly contribute to the wellbeing of the individual.

#### FROM HIGH-PERFORMANCE TO SPORTS FOR ALL

During the last decade, Qatar has been heavily investing to host numerous international mega sport events, build sports centers of excellence, sports science and research and sports conferences and exhibitions, rising to a global player in sports; improving the profile of Qatar and inspiring people to be more physical active. Over the last years, the focus on high-performance sports has more and more shifted to a higher active involvement of the entire population in sports.

Qatar National Master Plan (MME) in coordination with Ministry of culture and sports (MoCS) formerly (QOC) through the public recreational and sport facilities master plan aimed to improve opportunities for country's development to be more physically active for everybody living in Qatar, irrespective of age, gender, disabilities or nationality.

It is obvious, that Qatar has seen a rapid development in the recent past with an extremely high population growth in the past. The population peak is projected for 2015, until 2032, the country will see a shift in its population structure and the majority of the population is and will remain concentrated in urban centers. Having a look on cultural characteristics, there are different approaches towards exercise and sport for both, the Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Qatar. Cultural considerations involving social (family and community), religious, economic (education, affordability and appropriate facilities) and environmental (exposure, location, accessibility to facilities) factors influence towards physical activity and sport. Barriers were identified, that have specific facility and infrastructure related relevance, are considered in the public recreational and sports facilities guidelines and the facility development plan.

#### FEMALE - ONLY FACILITIES

As explained earlier, cultural values and personal expectations form the demand for dedicated female only facilities. Thereby the differentiation of mixed and female only facilities is based on the gender specific popularity factor, the percentage of people being interested in gender dedicated facilities and the national demographic projection for 2032. Depending upon the actual gender distribution per district by 2032 the share of mixed and female only facilities might change, for example in the case of labour camps, where a higher percentage of males is expected.

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### PLOT SIZE PER RESIDENT PLANNING STANDARD CONCLUSION

The tables on this page show the minimum plot sizes per facility type, differentiated in Category I (Standard Facilities) and Category IV (Special Activities).

In all, the tables show the required space for a sufficient sport facility provision per resident, the average land area requirement per resident totals 4,19 m<sup>2</sup> per resident. Below are the main guidelines and standards approved by MOCS and MME.

#### Category I – District Level

Facility	Plot Size (sqm)	Field of Play (Sqm)	Building* (sqm)	Parking (sqm)	Landscape, open space, access (Sqm)	Catchment Population	Sqm/ person
Indoor Sports hall	3,200	730	670	700	1,100	8,000	0.40
Shaded tartan sports field	1,350	510	100	375	365	23,000	0.06
FIFA standard Football Field - artificial grass (68*105m)	10,850	7,140	160	550	3,000	39,000	0.28
Double FIFA Standard Football Field / Cricket Combined - artificial grass (120*156m)	23,075	19,700	125	1,250	2,000	55,000	0.42
Football Field - 5 aside Artificial grass (25*35m)	1,525	875	50	250	350	15,000	0.10
Football Field - 7 aside Artificial grass (35*50m)	3,000	1,750	75	375	800	28,000	0.11
Swimming Pool (15*25m)	4,000	375	1,450	625	1,550	16,000	0.22
Swimming Pool (25*50m)	10,000	1,250	5,500	1,250	2,000	54,000	-

\*Building size in addition to field of play

**MIN. 1.58 M<sup>2</sup> / Resident**

#### Category II – Town Level

Facility	Facility Type	Plot Size (sqm)	Catchment Population	Sqm/ Person
Squash Court	Squash court	350	60,000	0.01
Beach Sports Field	Beach soccer	1,500	950,000	0.01
	Beach Volleyball	2,000	130,000	0.02
Track & Field	Athletics	22,000	170,000	0.13
Tennis Court	Tennis	1,300	7,000	0.19

**MIN. 0.36 M<sup>2</sup> / Resident**

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**Category III – National Level**

Facility	Facility Type	Plot Size (sqm)	Catchment Population	Sqm/ Person
Baseball Pitch	Baseball / softball	20,000	210,000	0.10
Golf Course	Golf	600,000	310,000	1.94
Climbing wall	Climbing	800	400,000	0.01
Archery Range	Archery	5,000	1,500,000	0.01
Shooting Range	Air Rifle	5,000	190,000	0.03
	Trap & Skeet	5,000		
Ice Rink	Ice Hockey	5,000	470,000	0.01
	Ice Skating	5,000		
Skate	Skate Park	1,500	320,000	0.01
Equestrian Center **	Equestrian / Polo	80,000	500,000	N.A.

**MIN. 2.11 M<sup>2</sup>/ Resident**

\*\* The catchment population of an equestrian center strongly depends on the type of facility (standard, size, etc.) and can vary extremely. It has therefore been defined based on international benchmarks and shall only provide a general outline. Further assessment will be required.

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## Open Space, Recreational and Sport Facilities Development Guidelines

### 4.0 STANDARDS APPLICATION GUIDELINES

#### 4.1 VISION

Planning requires vision, so does the planning for recreation facilities and open space. In deriving a vision for the standards application, we may need to consider such attributes as the function(s) of the target area (e.g. whether it is principally a residential and/or tourist area); location and physical characteristics; population structure and socio-economic characteristics; recreation potential and opportunities particularly any attractive recreation spots; level of existing facilities and areas of shortfall; flexibility in the use of facilities including dual or multiple use through the co-location planning approach; accessibility of facilities; scope for concerned agencies development plans; scope for special facilities; and provision and accessibility of facilities for special groups such as the disabled.

##### What these standards are:

- A strategic guide for space allocation of facilities at a neighborhood, local, district, town, metropolitan and national scale;
- A working tool for forward planning to fill the vacuum with respect to a consolidated set of guidelines and standards which will be informed by regular review and updating;
- A yardstick for comparing districts with respect to facility equity and for measuring progress on service delivery.
- A tool for motivating for new facility requirements and investment to achieve a minimum level of service;
- A starting premise for negotiation with developers and various local, provincial and government departments with respect to land allocation;
- A set of commonly acceptable rules and guidelines for allocation of shared space within the community;
- A guideline of facility types that can be clustered or shared to achieve co-location concept, space saving and other accrued benefits;
- Input parameter for measuring accessibility of people to a range of open space and recreation facilities.

##### What they are not:

- Recipes for detailed planning of a district without consideration of local needs and urban context and applicable policies;
- Exact standards to be applied irrespective of context or proper planning processes and consultation;
- A blue-print for development.

**In summary** the guidelines are applicable with respect to four planning components:

- Forward Planning – providing an equitable basis for allocation of scarce land and capital budget resources together with limited locational guidelines for distributing various types of facilities and public spaces;
- Development Control – they provide guidance on the number of facilities required, and their scale and site requirements;
- Plan Implementation – providing a yardstick to measure sufficiency or need of facilities on a broad scale;
- Improving Quality of Life – ensuring that a full range of open space and recreational facilities is accessible to all communities, thus contributing significantly to improving the quality of lives in communities.

#### 4.2 GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL PARK PROVISION IN QATAR

We recommend that National Park to be created according to four sub categories, listed hereafter. A proposed location for each category is classified in Table 5

- i. A National Park to express the national status and dignity of the country;

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- ii. A National Park to commemorate a prime place of national interest;
- iii. A National Park to serves a diversify of national recreational demands;
- iv. A National Park to be designated for special interest or use; and
- v. A National Park for the touristic destination within a natural environment area

All National Parks should express the requirements of the people of the country. It is created for the use of the people residing within its adjacent area and for those who would commute to visit it from all over the country. This last rule applies for Regional and City Parks. Summary of proposed sub categories of national park is shown in Table 5

For Qatar, the creation of National Park should not follow any specific standards (except safety and basic requirements). Allocation, size and specifications of National Parks is to be decided in relation with the Natural Environmental requirements and Urban land use and Planning design.

**Table 4: Summary of proposed sub Categories of National Park**

Type / Category	Function	Proposed use and characteristics	Proposed Location / Theme / etc
Expresses national status and Identity	Park to visualize the Pride of the Nation, dignity, wealthy, healthy, harmonized way of life of the People. The use of the Park may be restricted when there is a big ceremony or official function.	Passive area in landscape or natural state. Parking spaces, Wide Promenade for walking and jogging, bicycle trail. Horse riding trail may be provided. Restaurant, Café may be provided.	Around the Cornish and Proposed Doha Grand Park near the Diwan Emiri.  Close to the Major Mass Transport Accesses.
Commemorates a prime place of national interest	Park to commemorate the importance to the nation or to enhance the historical important place of the nation.	Ceremonial Pavement Plaza, Ornamental Garden, Monument, Architecture	Near the Cornish and Government office Buildings.  Clock Tower etc.
Serves various national recreational demands	Large scale Park that serves the wide range of recreational needs of the people of the State. The recreation, which required big area are introduced. Recreation demand that could not full-fill in other category Park shall be considered. Thematic Parks may be created when the demand arises.	Natural lands, landscape mounding, lake/pond, forest, landscaped borders, parkways, horse riding trail, bicycle trail, Indoor facilities, etc. Necessary facilities and equipment shall be introduced to suit the Theme of the Park.	Out skirts of Metropolitan Doha. These act as buffer to prevent the uncontrolled sprawl of the city. The size of the park may vary from 200 ha to 1,000 ha.  Several parks are to be planned where have the good connection to the Mass Transport.
Designated for special interest	Parks/Facilities of special purpose those, which need cooperation with mulch authorities or require special care and attention, such as Zoological Park, Botanical Garden shall be considered as National Park.	Zoo, Botanical Garden, Heritage Park, Bio Source Park, Marine Park, Desert Park., Motor Sports Circuit, Mega Sports oriented and Others	Extension of existing facility may be required.  Location of those Parks shall have good access to Mass transportation.

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Touristic destination in Natural Area	National Park shall be provided to reduce the development impact on the nature areas and/or provide the place to stay with affordable budget at the beach.	Beach, Parking, Tent site, chalets, Grass Fields, Fishing deck, board walk, Rental facilities, Kiosk etc.	Where natural resources are available.
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### 4.3 GUIDELINES FOR METROPOLITAN PARKS PROVISION IN QATAR

The appreciation of Regional Identity shall be used in the development of Regional Parks.

The provision of this scale of park is to serve regions outside Great Doha. Emphasized Characteristics of each of the served region would reflect its image and add to the leisure destination of the whole country

Table 6 shows the recommended themes for the metropolitan parks In Qatar.

**Table 5: Themes for the Metropolitan Parks in Qatar**

Region	Recommended Theme
Al Doha	Cultural, Capital city theme parks
Al Shamal Municipality	Port, Archeological Places, Sea Turtle, Eco Parks
Al Khor Municipality	Port, Mangrove, Marine Diversity
Al Rayyan Municipality	Hills Landscape, water-based recreation
Al Wakra Municipality	Dune, Fishing Village
Al Dayyen	Passive / Traditional farming –based recreation

### 4.4 Standards Application Guidelines for Community – Based open space ( Parks)

- Proposed size of parks includes both active and passive open spaces, in case of having Al Farjan facility /playgrounds within the vicinity, the area of the playground to be deducted from park's size
- For Qatari and low- density residential areas, the priority will be given to the catchment population not to the catchment distance.
- In the land availability issues Neighborhood parks is not essential to be provided in low density AND Qatari housing areas where the people likely to have access to their own private gardens.
- In high density area, interstitial areas and undeveloped plots can be utilized to meet the need for neighborhood or local parks
- Multi- functional open space is recommended wherever possible
- Co-Location Planning concept will be a key solution in many cases whether to meet the demand with the land availability issues or to provide the best utilization of the spaces and guarantee land efficiency.

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4.5 GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY - BASED PARKS PROVISION

Table 6: Proposed Community Oriented Parks Definition and Basic Contents

Category	Definition	Basic Contents	Special Remarks
<b>Town Park</b>	<p>Comprehensive Park provides wide range of activities from passive to active.</p> <p>Community center should be included for the wide variety of programmed services by the community. It may focus on specific community needs such as cultural arts, fitness, etc. This commitment to serving specific niches of programming will further allow residents to enjoy varied experiences.</p> <p>Wide Children's Play Area to be provided within the park boundary.</p>	<p>Community Center, Picnic shelter and picnic area, Performance area, Multi-Purpose fields, Tennis, Basketball and/or Multi-Purpose courts, Path Playground, Un-programmed recreational open space, Parking, Toilet, Substantial athletic fields with spectator facilities for organized sports ranging from football to volleyball.</p> <p>Depend on the local demand, Family Use may be considered, but the limitation in park use shall not exceed half of the same category.</p>	<p>Either Mass transport access or the direct access from the secondary major road network.</p> <p>Town Park will accommodate different types of uses. Town Parks within a city can have a specific use such as family or sports and/or public use</p> <p>Dal Al Hamam Park is a good example of this category.</p>
<b>District Park</b>	<p>Natural and landscaped open spaces area for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the entire community who require open spaces for a variety of community activities.</p> <p>District parks provide the additional features that meet expanded recreational needs not provided at the neighborhood park.</p> <p>District park where children may play, families may picnic, and individuals may find solitude or neighbors to chat with. Fenced or Open Park, at least 800m radius from residences.</p>	<p>Guardhouse, drinking fountain, shelters, and informal multipurpose lawn area for picnic, multi purposed complexes play equipment, outdoor seating, and paved area for court game, lighting.</p>	<p>Combination of 2~3 Neighborhoods.</p> <p>District Parks will accommodate several types of uses. District Parks can have a specific use such as family or sports and/or public use.</p>
<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Basic Contents</b>	<b>Special Remarks</b>

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<p><b>Local Park</b></p>	<p>Serve as social and recreational focal point for neighborhoods and are the basic recreational units.</p> <p>Passive or active recreation in response to demographic and cultural characteristics of surrounding neighborhoods can be introduced, with opportunities for interaction with vegetation. Neighborhood parks are largely accessible by foot, bicycle within at least 400m from each residence.</p> <p>These are places where neighborhood citizens come to know one another and thereby promote their collective security.</p> <p>Could be designed as Fenced Family Only Park, Ladies Only Park or as General Park.</p>	<p>Guardhouse, drinking fountain, shelters, and informal multipurpose lawn area, multi purposed play equipment, outdoor seating, paved area for informal court game, lighting.</p>	<p>Within walking distance of residences of 400m.</p> <p>Local Parks will be co-located with Juma Mosques at local centers. Each park will have a single use and will be strategically distributed through the District according to the demographic character of the area.</p>
<p><b>Neighborhood Park</b></p>	<p>Designed to provide both active and passive short-term activities.</p> <p>Add landscape identity to the vicinity.</p> <p>Ornamented garden may be preferred when there are no children in the vicinity.</p>	<p>Distinct play areas for preschool and school age children, shelter structures, open space, multiple-use paved for court games, area for court games and lightings.</p> <p>Sitting area may be preferred in densely populated area.</p>	<p>Located within walking distance of 200~250m from each residence.</p> <p>Neighborhood Parks will be co-located with a daily mosque at neighborhood centers. Since most of the park users will be neighbors and local to the area, there is no requirement to put access restrictions on these parks.</p>

Guidelines to raise the awareness of the relationship between the health, education and cultural sectors and park and recreational facilities should be prepared as shown in Table 12

**Table 7 Special Additional program to add interests**

Program	Guidelines
HEALTH	Parks and green areas should be accommodated to practice healing and palliative care activities, occupational therapy, and horticultural therapy.
EDUCATION	Parks can be used as a place for educational activities, such as temporary exhibits, demonstration of agriculture technologies, fairs and flora exhibition etc. The proposed uses should be coordinated with schools and educational institutions.
CULTURE	Parks can also be used for open air multiple culture events; theatre, music, family and children parties etc. The proposed uses should be coordinated with Cultural institutions.

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### 4.6 Standards Application Guidelines for the sports oriented open space

- The preferred location Community sports and recreational facilities are to be co-located with the public parks in the same planning level
- Multipurpose pitch can be an alternative for a full package of playgrounds in case of land availability issues
- Special attention should be given to the cultural relevance of core activities. For instance, when providing for water sports, amenities for men and boys should be separated from women
- The existing and committed projects for al Farjan to be assessed against the future provision of both open space , recreation and sports
- Internal accommodation of about 1000-2000 m2 to be provided in district and town level that includes (changing rooms, WCs, first aid room, sports equipment storage, maintenance equipment storage , prayer room)

### 4.7 Informal Open Space

#### 4.7.1 Guidelines for Pedestrian Plazas

- Pedestrian plazas complete the center by reducing the chaos at transition spaces. Plazas should be designed for circulation and connection of linear pedestrian walks. Careful placement of pedestrian plazas offer passive opportunities for meeting and gathering and can include either formal or informal site amenities.
- Pedestrian plazas to be located also adjacent to public Transport station (e.g. Metro / BRT stations) to accommodate the pedestrians flow. Park and ride point will also be a potential point to allocate pedestrian plazas.
- Qatar hosting for major international sports event such as FIFA 2022 or Olympic events will require providing celebration sites and that to be considered in the allocation of open space / pedestrian plazas especially within capital city centers, metropolitan and town centers , Pedestrian Plazas preferred to be allocate in the main visual points where a distinctive visual perception can take place.
- The placement of benches and site furnishings offer more formal site amenities. The use of rock walls, boulders and landscape elements offer less formal site amenity opportunities. These are further described as natural landscape features that add to the aesthetic while affording the opportunity to be used as something else. This will be decided case by case according to the nature, function and the Vision of the center

#### 4.7.2 Guidelines for Interstitial Spaces

- The small, underutilized spaces between buildings can be described as interstitial spaces. For landscape design within centers every inch of real estate should be considered valuable. The underutilization of interstitial spaces with so much potential is an opportunity lost.
- Interstitial landscape spaces in centers can be utilized in different ways, such as the small pedestrian seating area or small children playgrounds (e.g. the one adjacent to Beverly hills tower) These types of spaces can be easily provided in between buildings and in places that might otherwise be considered dead zones.
- Interstitial spaces should be developed as gathering or seating areas or places for public art, way finding signage or beautification. The use of more detailed landscape plantings, human scale signage and architectural elements (such as small kiosks and sculpture) and site furnishings creates a sense of place.