

This report is dedicated to my brother, Late Engineer Obinna Kingsley Michael Akubueze who passed away in a plane crash on the 3rd of June 2012. He was truly a pillar of support and a source of inspiration to me. I thank GOD for the gift of life and the strength to carry on.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report compares two neighbourhood parks in Abuja, Nigeria through an analysis of their use and design characteristics. The comparison was carried out after a detailed assessment of both parks was undertaken.

The research study also highlights the importance and benefits of parks and open spaces in our cities, while providing an insight into the way parks and open spaces are used by the residents of Abuja.

The assessment of both parks was carried out using sixteen evaluation criteria formulated through a combination of similar methods developed by Project for Public Spaces Inc. in a handbook for creating successful public spaces (PPS, 2000) and methods developed by the City of Toronto in a study of five inner city parks (Toronto, City 1988). The

Under the contextual framework criteria, the
Maitama Amusement Park, which is situated

intricate space which keeps bringing them back to the park. Under the social content criteria, the Maitama Amusement Park clearly ranks higher because it offers users a variety of activities which keeps them active and stimulated while the Durban Street Neighbourhood Park has very few elements that constantly create activities. Also, both parks fail to provide adequate amenities such as washrooms, waste bins and signage.

Under the safety content criteria, the Durban Street Neighbourhood Park evidently has better street views compared to the Maitama Amusement Park which lacks street views, though it enjoys natural surveillance from the housing estates beside it. At night time, both parks are not well illuminated due to insufficient lighting which consequently results in a lot of dark corners within the parks except for the south-west corner of the Durban Street Neighbourhood Park which is always well lit at night.

Finally, the attractions criteria showed that the Maitama Amusement Park has more activity generators while the Durban Street Neighbourhood Park offers users a more interesting food component. Finally, users find both parks to be aesthetically pleasing to them.

Overall, the Maitama Amusement Park was found to be more attractive to users because it ranked higher in most of the evaluation criteria.

Redesign the park entrance for better access and improved traffic flow.

Improve pedestrian access.

Create school recreational programmes.

Provide adequate amenities such as washrooms and waste bins.

Provide improved maintenance.

Provide adequate lighting in the park.

Provide clear views of the park's main entrance from the street.

