Abstract:

Humans, by nature, are always in interaction with their surroundings. Urban open space is a place that these interactions are most powerful. Areas that outside of urban buildings that are related to city and being used by people are all urban open spaces. Street furniture is being used to satisfy aesthetical needs and comfort of people in both cities and urban open spaces. Street furniture is indispensable for urban open spaces and is a landscape element that serves eating, traveling, resting, working, etc. purposes. Pavement, trash cans, bench, bus stops, lighting poles, billboards, etc. are some of the many street furniture. The purpose of this study was to determine the current state, functionality and aesthetical characteristics of street furniture (flooring, lighting units, bench units, border units) in city of Trabzon, central park (Meydan Parkı). Thus, current state of street furniture in central park was evaluated, present problems were determined and necessary solutions were provided.

Key terms: Urban Open Space, Street furniture, Trabzon.

Introduction:

Urban open spaces are places that people fulfill their social needs and be in communication with their environment, also, providing recreational activities.

Urban open spaces are all of the area in the city that city is built upon, citizens that using and city related activities taking place (Bakan and Konuk, 1987). Cubuk (1991) describes urban environment as structured and unstructured areas that where includes four essentials of human life (shelter, work, entertainment/rest, transportation) and a settlement texture. According to Krier (1979) urban environment is places that are located between buildings regardless of aesthetic values of the city.

In urban environment or landscape area units that placed for user comfort, movement control, protection and entertainment are called “Urban Furniture” (YTU Mimarlık Fakültesi Kentsel Tasarım Çalışma Grubu, 1982).

Urban furniture can be found on all open spaces in a city; their users are unknown, they have multiple functions and usually are serving for public interest. As a result of some processes, urban furniture along with urban concept is a system consisting products to satisfy the needs of its users (Hacıhasanoğlu, 1991).

Urban furniture is critical urban identity component that should be prioritized as much as urban planning and organization of living areas. Everything that you see at streets is part of this identity (URL-1).

Urban furniture are all of the static things that make streets useful and functional, such as lamp post, telephone booths, mail boxes, fences, transportation stops, utility poles, etc. (Ozaydın vd, 1989).

Urban furniture includes; pavement, square items, water games, trash bins, benches, sidewalks, bicycle road, racecourse, garden and parcel borders, parking and park meters, other distinctive items, bus stops, rest/entertainment areas, ceremony areas, public toilets, etc. (Durmus, 2008).

In the light of all these definitions, urban furniture are elements that placed on various places around the city to make citizens lives easier and prevent problems that might occur.

According to Ergen et al. (2013), urban furniture are important for balancing human-nature relation, urban comfort and fulfilling user needs. Urban furniture are bridges between city and people and in a constant development. In past urban furniture were planned accordingly to public needs but today
they are designed to satisfy user needs, prevent problems that may occur, to perform some tasks and include social and cultural activities.

In both urban designing and landscape designing, structural units that provides information, comfort and safety as well as satisfying physical needs, environmental hygiene. These units are known as urban furniture, they have to be in harmony with other designing elements and they improve visual value of landscape designing elements when they used properly (Altincelik and Koc, 2003).

Urban furniture must be;

- A part of the city,
- Reflect the characteristics of its environment,
- Lively, dynamic, fulfilling needs when necessary, relaxing, entertaining and informative,
- Have a quality that is inviting,
- Creating a system with urban furniture that creates a dependable, healthy, protective, and breathing environment (Sancak, 2009).

Materials and Methods:

Trabzon Square park of Trabzon province in Eastern Black Sea region was selected for this study (Fig. 1). Increased problems in people’s lives with heavy work load make them use parks more to satisfy their recreational needs. This park was selected due to its location, located in city center, its characteristics, filled with social accessories, being used every season and for recreational activities it has.

Literature review was made on subject. Dining units, bench units, exhibition area, sale units, ornamental pools, lightning and trash units are present in the study area. Functionality and aesthetics of existing urban furniture were evaluated.

Benzes:

Fast urbanization and increase in population makes sitting and relaxation areas more important for people in cities. Amount of bench type units reflects the area usage.

Trabzon Square Park is located in a central location; this is why it’s crowded most of the time. Benches in the park allows observation, sitting, and resting, also, color and shape of the bench units are aesthetically pleasing. Bench units are modern, ergonomic, aesthetic, and consist of iron-wood. Location of these bench units are under trees, street edges, next to pool and other water units, and parterres (Fig. 2).
Lightning units:

Lightning unit improves visual quality of the city. Artificial lightning units (ground units, short/tall lightning units) in Trabzon Square Park are used for limiting functionality, guiding, highlighting, and illumination (Fig. 3). Square Park is lightning unit rich. These units added better visuals and improved aesthetics with their color transitions.

Pavements:

Pavements of urban public spaces are important units of landscape and they are the surface that human activities take place on. These units can have many purposes. They can have different texture, color, shape, pattern and size, and contributes to identity of the city. In Square Park pavements along with ground lightings are guiding. Pavements in the park are in different colors, size and type and suit the area (Fig. 4). There isn't any grass cover in the park.
Water units:

Water is an important element for landscape architecture. Using water in designs relax people physically and psychologically. Water units gain more importance aesthetically when they are used with motion and lightning units. Water can sometimes be an entertainment element but usually it helps resting. Ornamental pools and water games draw attention of people but especially children’s. Water units in the park attracts even more interest during night with night lightings and provides better visual quality (Fig. 5).

Border units:

Identifying essentials of landscape borders helps explanation of functionality of the borders. Connectivity is important during bordering of two different areas. Border units can be living or inanimate. In the Square Park bordering units are small iron fences and wooden flowerpots (Fig. 6).

Other functional units:

Urban accessories gain functionality according to needs. Shading units, flag poles, fountains, emblems, motorcycle parks, trash cans and monuments (Fig. 7) are important features of urban parks. Some urban accessories have aesthetic value while some others have functions. Sometimes aesthetical units can gain functions. For example; Trabzonspor emblem at Trabzon Square Park is a symbol but also has a function since people can take pictures with it. Different units and designs in the park have a certain order and don’t interfere with transit.
Results and Discussion:

Urban furniture that designed for public use creates an identity and a sense of familiarity in the environment. Urban furniture are being used to satisfy resting, eating, and other social needs. Benches and boards on these park and squares can be important socially. Urban furniture should be functionally and aesthetically relaxing and pleasing to make people use these units more.

Most of the lightning units in the Square Park are used for visual quality and aesthetics (Fig. 8) and by functionality for guiding people (Fig. 9). Water units were enhanced with lightning units and some functionality was added (Fig. 10). Also, pavements were limited to their purposes with limiting units. Trees and entrances are highlighted with lightning units (Fig. 11). Statues are other units that can enhance the visual quality of the city centers. Functionality of the statues in the Trabzon Square Park is to gather people together, guide and unite them (Fig. 12). During the designing of urban accessories their interactions with their environment designing principles should be taken into consideration. Designing should focus fulfilling needs, environment and urban identity.
Figure 8. Visual and aesthetic lightning units

Figure 9. Lightning unit orientation function

Figure 10. Water play area

Figure 11. Border unit and tree lightning

Figure 12. Trabzon Square Park monument
References


