

New Urban Nature(s) and Greenways – Strategies for Effective Planning, Design, and Management

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This presentation is based on literature review and precedent studies in North America, Europe and Asia. Substantial areas of neglected and underused lands exist in virtually all urban areas globally. These spontaneous landscapes, also known as drosscapes, are distributed unevenly in cities, often following infrastructure lines or abandoned land uses. Their spatial extent and distribution is unique in every city and with respect to their relationship with other green spaces – thus representing important opportunities to add to, or complement, existing greenways.

Because these new urban nature(s) are often perceived as dangerous, messy and unhealthy, new strategies are needed to realize the opportunity they present for expanding and enhancing greenways. The presentation will discuss selected strategies; to build constituencies of public support, to manage these ecosystems to provide ecosystem services and mitigate associated disservices, and to integrate these new urban nature(s) into greenways. Precedent studies will illustrate the variable but distinct character these landscapes present and how they have been successfully transformed into urban greenways that are valued in their host communities.

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Author Biography

Jack Ahern, Ph.D., FASLA, FCELA, is emeritus professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture. He researches and writes about how ecological knowledge and theory can be applied in landscape design, planning, and management. His latest book is *Design with Nature on Cape Cod and the Islands* (UMass Press 2022). He is currently researching how novel urban ecosystems can be designed and managed, globally, in the Century of the City