

## Sergei Sobyenin chairs meeting of the Council for Public Space



A meeting of the Council for Public Space, which includes architects as well as Russian and foreign designers, was held at the Muzeon Arts Park. The attendees discussed projects to improve and develop city parks, and to renovate streets and outbound motorways.

According to [Acting Mayor Sergei Sobyenin](#), this year work will continue to improve the city's largest parks as well as the so-called second level parks, such as Tushinsky and Izmailovsky, which will be brought up to standard within two years.

This year's efforts will also include a project to build 50 people's parks with a total area of 110 hectares on the city's abandoned lots and wasteland. Following the meeting with local council deputies, Moscow authorities selected 20 more objects for improvement.

Mr Sobyenin mentioned the programme to build [pedestrian areas](#), which will create six such areas in 2013 – on [Krymskaya Embankment](#), [Nikolskaya](#) and Bolshaya Dmitrovka streets, and others. In addition, 50 [bike paths](#) are to be built this year, with the largest going from Muzeon Park to Victory Park.

The Acting Mayor of Moscow called reviewing all pedestrian routes a priority for the future. They should be freed from excessive advertising and repaired. Lighting should be installed and other improvements made where needed. Mr Sobyenin also said he believes all improvement projects should be individualised.

Architect Jan Gehl, who has studied the city for 18 months, compared the centre of Moscow with central streets in London and Paris. According to Mr Gehl, the Russian capital has a well-developed metro system, but lacks sufficient surface public transport. He suggested lowering the speed limit in the city centre and [building car parks](#) along the Boulevard Ring. Based on the architect's observations, 93% of the city's embankments are well suited for vehicles and only 7% are suited for pedestrians. He noted the general lack of parks and recreation areas, but commended Moscow's efforts to build bike paths, [plant greenery on Tverskaya Street](#), limit parking on pavements and other recently adopted measures.

In response, Mr Sobyenin mentioned the new park being built on Triumphalnaya Square, the construction of which will hinder the flow of traffic there. A site will be arranged opposite the Khudozhestvenny Cinema whereas one-way traffic will be introduced on Bolshaya Dmitrovka Street, the pavements will be broadened and an illegal parking area will be closed. The layout of public transport routes will be changed next year to make using public transport more convenient for passengers.

Sergei Kuznetsov, Chief Architect of Moscow, said [Zaryadye Park](#) may be completed by the end of 2015. The design contest, in which six design firms are participating, will conclude in mid-November 2013. Mr Kuznetsov explained that the site of the park is assessed at \$1.5 billion, which makes it one of the most expensive in the world. The number of visitors is estimated at 12 million people per year. The chief architect said that three quarters of the park will be green, while the remaining area will be paved. The park will have cultural facilities, food and shopping, as well as underground parking. Mr Sobyenin added that the architectural monuments around the park should be brought up to standard by the time the park opens.

Bryan Evans, senior partner of the design firm Gillespies, presented a project to improve Rublyovskoye Motorway, with a focus on improving the surrounding area, raising transport efficiency and creating a better night-time perception of the area. To this end, improving the landscape, raising the curb and other measures are proposed.

[Sergei Kapkov](#), Acting Minister of the Government of Moscow and Head of the Department of Culture, reported on changes made in Gorky Park. For example, a 10 kilometre pedestrian trail is suggested from Vorobyovy Hills to the future Zaryadye Park. Five river terminals will operate along the route. Since only four percent of park visitors are senior citizens, the Gorky Park management have proposed setting up activity centres for all ages. The lawn space in the park will increase by 300% as early as next year. The number of unused structures is to be cut by 50% and asphalt-covered areas will decrease by 30%. Mr Kapkov also reported that the park has four new entrances.

Architect Udo Dagenbach presented an improvement project for the 3.5-hectare Tagansky Park which includes a new fountain and a multi-functional leisure space.