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## Road junction Papanastasiou - Voulgari

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Thessaloniki, Greece

### IN A NUTSHELL

The Municipality of Thessaloniki is committed to designing and implementing pilot projects of urban regeneration based on the local bioclimatic characteristics, in order to adapt to climate change impacts.

### Background

The lack of green spaces is acknowledged as one of the major urban deficiencies for the city of Thessaloniki, combined with densification and compact city development. The significant height of the buildings, the increased traffic and the excessive use of air conditioners for heating and cooling, add to the drastic degradation of the urban environment thus creating a variety of environmental and social impacts.

This project is located on the junction Papanastasiou – Voulgari, next to Nea Elvetia park, a big green area on the East side and the boundaries of the 5<sup>th</sup> municipal district. This area is not as much densely populated and has a better percentage of green areas per

Picture 1: View from Papanastasiou str.



Picture 2: View from Voulgari str.



inhabitant compared with other parts of the city. Nevertheless the need for more green areas and the relief from the Urban Heat Island Effect is evident and necessary. As seen in the pictures 1 and 2, the project area was formerly completely empty with no vegetation and infrastructure, whereas now is transformed into a beautiful green area, welcoming visitors as a repose spot.

### Interventions of the project

The project aims at creating a new green area in relevance with the neighboring Nea Elvetia park, with a new water canal and beautiful colors and scents from vegetation combined with the establishment of outdoor gymnastics equipment. It is designed on a bio climatic basis, with the use of materials with a water absorbing capacity and lots of new plants. Approximately 80% of the area is covered with vegetation, with many trees species (Cupressus sempervirens, Tilia platyphyllos, Elaeagnus angustifolia, Magnolia grandiflora, Pinus halepensis, Catalpa bignonioides, Prunus serrulata "kanzan" and Robinia pseudoacacia), (Picture3) aromatic bushes (Elaeagnus spp., Teucrium fruticans, Phlomis fruticosa, Rosmarinus officinalis "prostatus", Lavandula angustifolia, Santolina chamaecyparissus, Salvia officinalis, Melissa officinalis artemisia spp. and Perovskia atriplicifolia) (Pictures 4, 5) and grass. It also contains sitting areas, garden paths and lighting.



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5

### Benefits

The project serves as a "green oasis", a spot for relaxation, separated from the neighbouring buildings, noise and pollution with a high fence, providing a nature and health experience. As a city park containing gymnastic infrastructure it encourages an active lifestyle and enhances physical activity. With its high vegetation coverage the park reduces the air temperature during summer months, purifies the air, absorbs CO<sub>2</sub> and makes the city area more resilient through its ability to manage storm water and mitigate flooding.

### Financing the project

The project's budget amounts to 700.000 Euro and is financed by the National Strategic Reference Framework 2014-2020 in the context of the Regional Operational Programme of Kentriki Makedonia.