

EXPLORING THE URBAN PARKS IN CHENGDU, CHINA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
PEOPLE'S PARK AND XINGLONG LAKE PARK

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Historic Preservation Planning

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Dec 2025

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the comparative analysis of People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park in Chengdu, China, focusing on their roles in urban memory, cultural significance, and contemporary urban planning. People's Park, established in 1911, is a historical landmark deeply embedded in Chengdu's cultural heritage, serving as a vibrant social and cultural hub. Conversely, Xinglong Lake Park, inaugurated in 2016, epitomizes modern urban planning and ecological sustainability within the rapidly developing Tianfu New Area. Through a detailed examination of both parks' locations, accessibility, historical significance, size, layout, facilities, activities, environmental features, and social impacts, this study elucidates how these urban spaces contribute uniquely to Chengdu's identity. Furthermore, the thesis discusses the balance between preserving historical and cultural heritage while meeting modern urban needs, offering insights into sustainable urban development. The findings underscore the dynamic interplay between historical preservation and contemporary innovation, emphasizing the importance of integrating these elements to enrich the urban experience for current and future generations.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jiayi Li was born and raised in Chengdu, China, a city known for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant urban life. Jiayi's early years in Chengdu cultivated a deep appreciation for historical architecture and urban spaces, inspiring a lifelong passion for preserving cultural landmarks.

At the age of 15, Jiayi moved to the United States alone to attend high school in Weston, Massachusetts. This experience broadened Jiayi's perspective and fueled a desire to blend Eastern and Western architectural traditions. Following high school, Jiayi pursued a Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Virginia. During this time, Jiayi gained technical skills in design while also developing a keen interest in the historical context of architecture.

Upon completing the undergraduate degree, Jiayi decided to specialize further by enrolling in the Historic Preservation Planning master's program at Cornell University. Here, Jiayi deepened the understanding of the principles and practices essential for conserving historical sites and integrating them into modern urban environments.

Jiayi's academic journey, from the bustling streets of Chengdu to the historic campuses of Boston, Virginia, and Cornell, reflects a commitment to bridging cultural heritage with contemporary urban planning. This diverse background informs Jiayi's approach to preserving the past while planning for a sustainable and vibrant future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Professor Michael Tomlan, for his unwavering support and guidance throughout the development of this thesis. His invaluable advice and encouragement helped me navigate both academic and personal challenges. I extend my heartfelt thanks to George Frantz for the insightful meeting before I began my thesis, which provided me with clarity and direction.

Special thanks go to Yanchen Dong and her mother, Qing Chang, for visiting me in Ithaca during graduation season when my parents were unable to come. I thank Kami Cai for taking me on a spontaneous park trip on my birthday this July. I also thank Fanqi Yi, my friend since kindergarten, for inviting me to stay at her place in Philadelphia when my apartment lease ended. A special acknowledgment goes to my cat, Yuzu, for always being by my side.

I am profoundly thankful to Cornell University for fostering my intellectual growth and allowing me to express myself deeply and freely over the past two years. Lastly, I thank my parents for the unconditional love and the value that they have instilled in me.

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INTRODUCTION

Urban parks are vital to the social, cultural, and ecological frameworks of cities, offering residents green spaces for recreation, cultural engagement, and environmental sustainability. In Chengdu, China, People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park are prime examples of how urban green spaces can shape and reflect a city's identity and evolution. This thesis explores the unique characteristics, historical significance, and contemporary roles of these two parks, underscoring the importance of integrating historical preservation with modern urban planning.

The primary focus of this study is to understand how both historical and modern urban parks contribute to Chengdu's cultural heritage and urban development. People's Park, rich in historical significance, acts as a living repository of the city's past, while Xinglong Lake Park showcases innovative approaches to urban sustainability and forward-thinking planning. Investigating these parks provides valuable insights into balancing tradition and modernity in urban green spaces, which is crucial for enhancing quality of life in rapidly urbanizing environments.

This investigation employs a comparative analysis of People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park across several dimensions: location and accessibility, historical significance, size and layout, facilities and activities, environmental and ecological features, social and cultural impact, and current management practices. Data will be collected through site visits, archival research, and analysis of existing literature and urban planning documents. This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of each park's unique contributions to Chengdu's urban landscape. The following chapters systematically explore these aspects. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the roles and significance of urban parks in urban environments, setting the context for the study. Chapter 2 focuses on People's Park, detailing its historical development, key features, and

cultural heritage. Chapter 3 examines Xinglong Lake Park, highlighting its modern design, ecological initiatives, and role in the Tianfu New Area. Chapter 4 presents a comparative analysis of the two parks, discussing their similarities and differences in contributing to Chengdu's urban fabric. Finally, Chapter 5 offers conclusions and recommendations for future urban park development in Chengdu, emphasizing the integration of historical preservation with sustainable urban planning.

By examining People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park, this thesis aims to demonstrate the multifaceted roles of urban parks in preserving cultural memory, promoting social interactions, and fostering environmental sustainability. This comprehensive study seeks to provide insights that can guide future urban planning efforts in Chengdu and other rapidly developing cities.

CHAPTER ONE: THE CONCEPT OF THE PARK IN CHINA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Due to the diverse orientation of different disciplines and scholars' varying perspectives and approaches, public space has been interpreted differently across fields. The academic community, both domestically and internationally, has yet to reach a consensus on a unified definition. In addition, the concepts associated with public spaces in different parts of the world differ due to the social, political, legal, economic, and aesthetic preferences of people at various times. This chapter introduces the conceptual influences upon the park in China, and how it evolved through the centuries to the present time.

1.2 CONCEPTS AND TERMS

In architecture, public space generally includes external environments such as streets, squares, and parks, emphasizing the physical properties of tangible spaces where people can freely engage in social activities. These spaces between built structures are viewed as material entities essential for human society. Examples include parks, tea houses, and squares, representing physical and concrete public spaces. In urban sociology, public space is regarded as a site for social interactions, a product of social relations and social actions. It is seen not only as a physical space but also as a social space of the city, reflecting its social attributes.

From the perspective of political science, public space is defined as a platform for political participation. Here, public space is often equated with the public sphere, drawing on Habermas's theory. In this context, the public sphere is an area between the state and society where citizens engage in public affairs. It operates independently of political and economic systems, allowing citizens to freely discuss and debate public issues, forming public opinion to supervise state power and influence public policy. Thus, the public sphere serves as a space where citizens realize their political aspirations, embodying civic engagement and serving political purposes.¹

Additionally, some scholars argue that the essence of modern public space lies in its human-centric nature. "Public" signifies its characteristic of serving people facilitating social interactions and events. Carl Stephan, in his work "Urban Space and Public Space," defines public space as a common area for functional or ritual activities, possessing a cohesive force that unites people into a whole during daily life or periodic celebrations, fulfilling the need for daily activities.² Therefore, this paper adopts definitions from urban sociology and architecture, viewing public space as a material space with physical and social attributes, where social activities occur.

¹ Habermas, Jürgen, et al. "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)." *New German Critique*, no. 3, 1974, pp. 49–55. *JSTOR*.

² Carr, Stephen. *Public Space*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992.

1.3 PARKS AND GARDENS IN CHINA

According to David Schuyler's research, European parks began to emerge around the 1830s, and the ideas there were later introduced to the United States.³ This development was closely related to promoting public health and recreational spaces with democratic ideals, reflecting the political environment's influence on ordinary people's pursuit of free thought and moral consciousness. Park and garden designers provided large lawns, open views, and flowing artificial lakes became parts of the basic scenery. By the early 20th century, the introduction of playgrounds, stadiums, and other activity areas had somewhat altered the earlier layout of parks, preserving the scenery while providing more space for human activities.⁴

Shi Mingzheng's research indicates that during this period, the concept of parks began to take shape in China. Previously, this term did not exist in cultural literature, indicating that it originated abroad. The reason for translating 'Public Park' as '公园' (gong yuan) is that it differs from '花园' (hua yuan, garden) and '园林' (yuan lin, landscape garden). A park implies public ownership and is accessible to everyone.⁵

Li Deying confirmed Shi Mingzheng's assertion that 'park' is a foreign term but questioned the claim that the characters for 'park' did not exist in Chinese history before the 20th century. After some investigation, Li Deying pointed out that in the "Book of Wei" and the "Biography of the Twelve Kings of Jingmu, King of Rencheng," there is a clear mention of "reducing the land of public parks to provide for the poor without occupation." Similarly, the characters for 'park' appear in "Northern History, Biography of the King of Rencheng." The

³ Schuyler, David. *The New Urban Landscape: The Redefinition of City Form in Nineteenth-Century America*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988, p. 66.

⁴ Cranz, Galen. *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America*. The MIT Press, 1989.

⁵ Shi, Mingzheng. *Beijing's Transformation Towards Modernity: Urban Construction and Social Change*. Peking University Press, 1995, p. 137.

context of these historical texts indicates that at that time, 'park' referred to royal gardens exclusively for the entertainment of the nobility, not public spaces for the general populace. Therefore, the term 'park' should be examined from multiple perspectives.⁶

On this basis, Cui Zhihai further argued for the ancient Chinese people's closeness to nature. He cited Zhang Han's "Miscellaneous Poems" from the Western Jin Dynasty, which includes the line "Spring harmonizes with the white Et shining on the garden," and Yang Jie's "Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang" from the Northern Wei Dynasty, which states "The beauty of gardens and pools of the mountains surpasses that of any king." Scholars and poets often composed poems in gardens, highlighting the flourishing of royal and private monastic gardens at that time, whether they were public parks or private gardens.⁷

Regarding the Chinese vocabulary, the term 'park' has existed since ancient times, but its function has changed in modern times, even overshadowing its original meaning. So why did the meaning of the word 'park' change?

This change cannot be separated from the historical context of the eastward spread of Western learning and China's modern translation tendencies. In the early 20th century, with the increasing frequency of Sino-foreign exchanges, new things from abroad were also localized. From a research article in the Republic of China, we can see the influence of foreign vocabulary on Chinese translations. Huang Yiren compared parks to "the flowers of the city," placing them in a position to showcase the city's image. Such facilities existed in urban construction worldwide and had various names. In London alone, there were areas called Park, Heath, Common, Garden, Wood, Green, and Square, among others. The English words indicate that for

⁶ Li, Deying. "Urban Public Space and Social Life: A Case Study of Modern Urban Parks." *Urban History Research*, no. 2, 2000, p. 128.

⁷ Cui, Zhihai. "Modern Park Theory and Research on Modern Chinese Parks: A Review of 'Urban and Park Theory'." *Historical Review*, no. 2, 2009, p. 165.

Londoners, the naming of recreational spaces varied based on size, planting conditions, and location. For example, 'park' originally meant a large courtyard, regardless of public or private ownership. The term 'public park' specifically refers to spaces with public significance.⁸ During the spread of this concept to the East, Japan first unified the naming of public recreational spaces as a 'park' and then developed the meaning. Influenced by Japan, China gradually adopted this translation, matching '公园' with 'park,' though this was not entirely accurate and changed the literal understanding of traditional Chinese parks.

Although the translation of 'park' was widely adopted in the early 20th century, the spread of any culture is not absolute. Combining the social background of the mid-to-late 19th century, the correct translation of 'public park' appeared in the Shanghai concessions in 1868 with the construction of the Shanghai Bund Park, a purely Western-led park and the earliest park in China. According to "Shanghai Research Materials," in 1868, the British and American concessions municipal council planned to create a "public garden" along the Huangpu River. In August of the same year, an English-style park was opened to the public. Research shows that by the early 20th century, 'public garden' and 'park' were considered equivalent in Chinese. For example, a 1905 entry in "Shen Bao" recorded: "Park expansion: The public garden at the foot of the outer bridge...work began in October and is nearing completion." This expansion of the park area came from the public garden. The old park was renovated in ten months with various improvements and renovations. This shows that the public garden gradually became simplified to a 'park' during its development. Whether 'park' or 'public park,' the Chinese character interpretation reflects only the meaning of a public area.⁹

⁸ Huang, Yiren. "A Study on Parks." *The Eastern Miscellany*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1917, p. 1.

⁹ Shanghai News Agency, editor. *Shanghai Research Materials*. Shanghai Bookstore, 1984, p. 473.

Dai Yifeng believes that the first domestic scholar to discuss modern urban parks from a public space perspective was Xiong Yuezhih in his 1996 research.¹⁰ Xiong Yuezhi, after reviewing the history of modern urban construction, identified Zhang Garden in late Qing Shanghai as a typical example of a private garden opened to public activities. In 1903, a Shanghai scholar rented his self-built courtyard to Westerners for a monthly rent of a thousand silver taels. Westerners added new recreational facilities and invited Western magicians to perform, making it very lively. Advertisements for "Uncle Zhang and Garden Company" began to appear in "Xinwen Newspaper" in July of the same year, promoting the garden with Chinese and Western cuisine, bicycle races, and magic shows. Soon after, the garden resumed Chinese management, but its operations declined after the founding of the Republic of China. Despite this, the garden showcased rare flowers and trees, Western lighting, photography technology, balloon rides, fireworks, calligraphy and painting exhibitions, photo exhibitions, and more, making it a comprehensive public place for gardens, teahouses, restaurants, theaters, halls, photo studios, exhibition halls, stadiums, amusement parks, and gatherings. "Successfully mobilized resources from traditional and Western cultures to create a unique public space," providing convenient social, learning, and recreational places for all walks of life, promoting more open, frequent, and diverse human interactions.¹¹

Secondly, we must pay attention to the trend of park construction in modern China. As known earlier, continuous foreign exchanges brought new things to China, which, while showcasing their uniqueness, also underwent localization. The 'public garden' became simplified to a 'park,' transforming lands initially reserved for royalty into areas broadly accessible to the

¹⁰ Dai, Yifeng. "Multiple Perspectives and Interpretations: Modern Urban Public Space in China, A Case Study of Modern Urban Parks." *Social Sciences*, no. 6, 2011, p. 136.

¹¹ Xiong, Yuezhi. "Zhang Yuan: A Study of a Public Space in Late Qing Shanghai." *Archives and History*, no. 6, 1996, pp. 32-42.

public. Learning from Japan's translation of 'park' deepened the Chinese understanding, replacing it with 'public park.' With the establishment of a new regime, old regimes collapsed, and old social lifestyles changed.

After Shanghai built its first modern park in 1868, various public facilities imposed restrictions on Chinese citizens due to different powers within the concessions. As a result, in 1890, the municipal council created a Chinese garden on the Suzhou River near the Bund, open to Chinese citizens for recreation, and declared it open to both Chinese and foreigners, naming it 'Chinese Garden' in 1915. In 1895, the council continued to build Kunshan Park at the intersection of Zhapu Road, Kunshan Road, and Wenjian Road, providing a playground for children. In 1909, the council built Hongkou Park, focusing on sports, followed by Huishan Park two years later and Zhaofeng Park in 1914. By 1928, the Bund, Hongkou, and Zhaofeng parks opened to the public, along with Central Park (now Zhongshan Park) in Beijing. Subsequently, parks like Xiannongtan Park, the Forbidden City, Beihai Park, Temple of Earth Park, and the Summer Palace, initially reserved for royalty, also opened to the public. In 1918, Guangzhou built its first park (Central Park), followed by Zhongshan Park in Xiamen in 1931, offering various recreational facilities like stadiums and theaters.¹²

In summary, during China's transition in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, significant changes in thought, culture, education, politics, economy, and transportation were reflected in urban construction, particularly parks. Some parks originated from private gardens, some were newly built by the government, and some were created by Westerners. As they opened to the public, they gradually added new content, continued traditions, transformed in development, and

¹² Li, Deying. "Urban Public Space and Social Life: A Case Study of Modern Urban Parks." *Urban History Research*, no. 2, 2000, p. 137.

either persisted or disappeared with time, providing rich, multidimensional spaces for citizens and diverse perspectives for studying modern Chinese social life.

CHAPTER TWO: PEOPLE’S PARK IN CHENGDU

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the bustling city center of Chengdu, there is a century-old park called People's Park. It is a popular spot for tourists visiting Chengdu and a beloved resting place for residents. People's Park is located near the city center in Qingyang District, approximately 700 meters west of Tianfu Square and about 500 meters from the famous tourist destination, Kuanzhai Alley. Shaocheng Road, Wenweng Road, Junping Street, and Xiaonan Street enclose the park. Residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments characterize the surrounding area. This chapter reviewed the history of the Park and described its features. The next section describes the current activities, suggesting that the potential to meet the needs should be re-examined.

2.2 THE HISTORY OF PEOPLE’S PARK

People's Park has witnessed Chengdu's transformative journey across three pivotal historical periods: the late Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China, and the establishment of New China. Constructed during the tumultuous 100-year span of Chengdu's evolution, People's Park has evolved alongside the city, witnessing its dynamic changes. The Park's construction and development carry the collective memory of Chengdu and multiple generations of its citizens. Analyzing the park's historical development not only unveils numerous city memories embedded

in its existence but also offers crucial insights into the entirety and continuity of Chengdu's urban memory.

People's Park, built in 1911, is the oldest in Chengdu. Initially, it was established to provide a place for people to perform, sell breakfast, and earn a living. Over time, it evolved into a leisure and entertainment venue and was originally known as Shaocheng Park. Its origins were rooted in Chengdu's unique regional characteristics during that era, particularly within the context of a divided large city and small city, where the smaller city, known as "Manchu City," exclusively accommodated the Eight Banners of the Qing Dynasty. As the Qing Dynasty declined in 1911, General Yukun and Zhou Shanpei initiated the construction of the park on Citang Street to provide livelihood opportunities for the struggling Banner people. Over time, the park expanded, incorporating additional areas behind Guan Di Temple and undergoing significant development, including the construction of notable structures such as Yingxi Building, Guanjia Building, Songyun Building, and Lake Pavilion.¹³

Referred to as "Shao Cheng Park" by the public due to its location in the middle of Shao Cheng, the park began to take shape by this point. In the Republic of China era, the park underwent further expansion and reconstruction in 1913, honoring martyrs of the 1911 Revolution with the installation of the "Memorial Monument to the Deaths of the Road Protectors in the Autumn of the Xinhai Revolution." Remarkably, this monument survived the 1933 Diexi earthquake and Japanese bombings in 1941 and received national recognition as a "National Key Cultural Relics Protection Unit" in 1988. Additional expansions occurred in 1914, dismantling the Yongji Warehouse and diverting water from the Jinshui River. Yang Sen's invitation to Lu Zuofu in 1924 led to the establishment of the Popular Education Center within

¹³ Chengdu Municipal Archives. "Records on Chengdu Provincial City Park." Fonds No. 0038; Catalogue No. 01; File No. 959.

the park, adding to its cultural significance. The park's facilities, including the Museum of Railway Protection Movement, Library, and Gingko Pavilion, became integral parts of Chengdu's cultural heritage.¹⁴

After founding the People's Republic of China in 1949, the revitalization of Chengdu led to the renaming of Shao Cheng Park as "People's Park" in 1950. In 1952, the park underwent renovation and expansion, including demolishing outdated structures and introducing new features such as an open-air square, fish garden, bird garden, bonsai garden, orchid garden, rockery, pavilion, and large-scale tree planting.¹⁵

Between 2001 and 2003, the People's Park pioneered a “greening” initiative by converting the park’s perimeters into street frontage, expanding the area to 155 acres. In the early 2000s, additional demolitions and green space management efforts further shaped the park's current form.¹⁶ Overall, over the past 70 years, it has undergone multiple renovations and upgrades. Unauthorized structures were removed, greenery was expanded, and the Park was integrated with the surrounding streets. The variety of flowers, plants, and trees increased, the park's area expanded, water features were added, the number of fish increased, and various folk activities were held to preserve traditional culture. The park's beauty now surpasses its former glory, becoming a city landmark for leisure and daily life.

Many cities have a People's Park, but few have one as vibrant and enduring as Chengdu’s People’s Park, which has thrived for over a century. Built for the people and flourishing because of the people, it uniquely combines ecological and cultural landscapes, a hallmark of Chengdu's

¹⁴ Zhang, Shuangshuang. "Goodbye Shaocheng: A Study on the Urban Space and Its Changes in the Shaocheng Area of Chengdu." Southwest Jiaotong University, 2014.

¹⁵ Chengdu Municipal Archives. "Records on Chengdu Provincial City Park." Fonds No. 0038; Catalogue No. 01; File No. 959.

¹⁶ Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute. *Revision of People's Park Plan in Chengdu*. Chengdu, Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute, 2016.

parks. Today, People's Park remains a testament to Chengdu's history, bearing the imprints of its past while evolving in step with the city's ongoing narrative.

2.3 PARK ZONES LAYOUT

The total area of People's Park is 131,898.42 square meters. This area includes five categories: green space, water area, road area, square area, and building footprint (Figure 1). The green space covers 52 percent of the area, while the water surface is 9.47 percent. The roads comprise 25 percent, and the public spaces provide 7.5 percent of the area. The buildings cover even less space, about 5 percent, making the park a pleasant open space.¹⁷



Figure1: Map of People’s Park at Entrance
Source: Jiayi Li

¹⁷ Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute. *Revision of People's Park Plan in Chengdu*. Chengdu, Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute, 2016.

The Gates

The principal gathering and scenic areas include the park's main gate, the new east gate, the south gate, and the west gate. The main gate faces Citang Street and Shaocheng Road, constructed in 1928 as part of the renovation of the old Shaocheng Park. It has been in use since then and serves as park visitors' main entrance and exit. This gate is prominently decorated for annual events like the Chengdu Chrysanthemum Exhibition and Spring Flower Exhibition. Entering the park through this gate and crossing the Jinshui Bridge and the Wutong Forest Avenue, you can directly access attractions such as the He Ming Teahouse, Shaocheng Garden, 1911 Revolution Bao Lu Memorial Square, and the artificial lake.

The new east gate is located on Citang Street within the eastern part of the park, adjacent to Banbian Bridge Street. This gate provides direct access to the Shanshui Waterfall Square, which covers an area of 1600 square meters. The waterfall is 43 meters wide and 12 meters high, constructed with approximately 3000 tons of stone, creating a large artificial rock landscape. Adorned with flowers, pine trees, and various plants, it presents a magnificent view. This spot is a popular place for Chengdu residents to relax, enjoy the coolness in the summer, and engage in leisure activities during holidays.¹⁸

The south gate is located on Junping Street. It facilitated the relocation of the children's playground from the west garden to the southern green area, providing a beautiful and fragrant green environment with a practical and convenient setup.

The west gate is situated on Xiaonan Street and has a splendid and elegant appearance. It features beautiful greenery along the street, combining with the western rest corridor to create a green belt. This makes urban transportation around People's Park more convenient. A new

¹⁸ Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute. *Revision of People's Park Plan in Chengdu*. Chengdu, Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute, 2016.

small car parking lot and surrounding green areas have been added to facilitate self-driving city tourists.

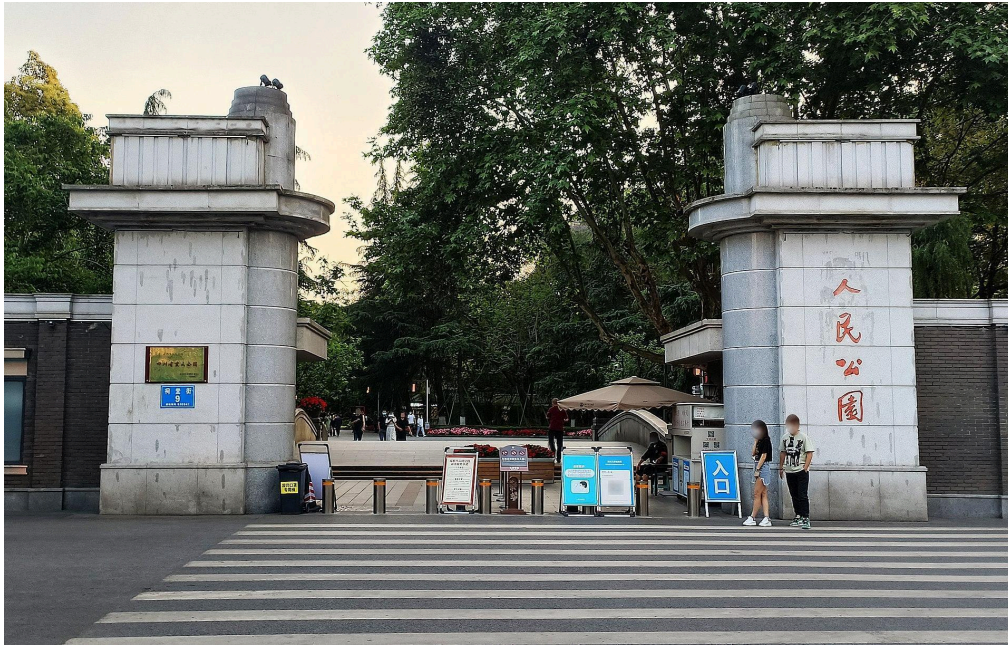


Figure 2: East Gate of People's Park
Source: <https://www.meipian.cn/36rfdwrp>

The Jinshui River, East Rockery, and Artificial Lake Area

A leisure and sightseeing area, the Jinshui River is near the lotus pond at the foot of the western mountain of People's Park. It stretches from the main gate to the east gate along the inner side. The river is 355 meters long and 6 meters wide, formed from the transformation of the original Jin River. The riverbed is paved with smooth pebbles, and large and small cobblestones are used for the riverbank. The area is adorned with various plants, such as peach trees, willow trees, Huangpu trees, chrysanthemums, and wintersweet. The changing seasons are evident: spring showcases pink peaches and green willows, autumn brings colorful yellow and russet leaves, and winter features the fragrance of wintersweet, creating a beautiful landscape that fully demonstrates the natural beauty of mountains, waters, and streams.

The East Rockery is 130 meters long, 48 meters wide, and 30 meters high. It is a popular place for Chengdu residents to escape the summer heat and a local resting and scenic spot during holidays.

The artificial lake is approximately 20 acres in size and has a gourd-like shape. Inside the lake are the elegant Goldfish Island and the Yongju Teahouse. Along the shore, there are willow trees, hibiscus, maidenhair trees, and peach trees. Six flower beds featuring seasonal flowers make the scenery extremely attractive.¹⁹

Xinhai Square Area

A leisure and commemorative area, Xinhai Square is located at the center of People's Park. Covering an area of 3000 square meters, the square has a building area of 110 square meters and a stage of 130 square meters. To meet the park's environmental requirements, the square features a ground-level bas-relief and shallow-relief monument that reflects the "Sichuan Xinhai Revolution History." The square is surrounded by cypress trees, creating a solemn and dignified landscape. The square's elegant and simple buildings provide a venue for gatherings, business transactions, mass fitness activities, and health-related events.²⁰

Restaurants and Teahouses

A leisure and entertainment area, this includes one restaurant and four teahouses. The facilities are Chengdu Zhong Shui Dumplings, He Ming Teahouse, Yongju Teahouse, Zhen Liu Teahouse, and Shuangquan Teahouse. Chengdu Zhong Shui Dumplings is located in the Zhiwei Pavilion. The restaurant can accommodate up to 300 people and offers a beautiful environment

¹⁹ Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute. *Revision of People's Park Plan in Chengdu*. Chengdu, Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute, 2016.

²⁰ Ibid.

and pleasant scenery. The interior and facilities of the restaurant meet the standards of the catering industry's B-level or higher. Based on the unique characteristics of the park and the advantages of the century-old park and century-old stores, the restaurant was transformed into a garden restaurant. It offers various types of tourist leisure and park package meals.

The teahouses are comparatively small facilities but meet several social needs. The He Ming Teahouse is located by the artificial lake (Figure 3). A stone bridge leads to the teahouse, with a green corridor surrounding the lake. It's adorned with ivy and jasmine on the trellis, creating a serene atmosphere.

The Yongju Teahouse is situated on Goldfish Island, where you can enjoy more than ten species of ornamental goldfish. There are also several hundred other fish. As Goldfish Island and Yongju Teahouse are in the middle of the lake, it's a cool place to relax, enjoy the coolness, watch the fish, fish for fun, and enjoy the scenery. This creates a cultural space for residents and visitors to relax, cool off, have fun, enjoy the scenery, and savor tea.

The Zhen Liu Teahouse is located on the western mountain of People's Park, integrating with the western mountain's green landscape and the small peach tree forest. This teahouse has lush trees, murmuring springs, the fragrance of flowers, a serene environment, towering rocks, and layered pavilions. The Shuangquan Teahouse is located in Shaocheng Garden, providing a great place for sightseeing and tea-drinking.²¹

²¹ Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute. *Revision of People's Park Plan in Chengdu*. Chengdu, Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute, 2016.



Figure 3: Heming Teahouse
Source: <https://www.peopleapp.com/?id=12433606>

Garden Sightseeing and Tour Area

This area includes Shaocheng Garden, Orchid Garden, and Bonsai Garden. Shaocheng Garden is located in the southern part of People's Park, adjacent to the main road. It is a garden within the garden that primarily exhibits traditional chrysanthemums, orchids, and bonsai. The garden follows a natural layout of Sichuan-style landscaping, with structures like corridors, pavilions, towers, and kiosks, all in the style of Sichuan folk houses. The garden is complemented by rockeries, lakes, and various southern garden plants, such as hibiscus, ginkgo, *Malus spectabilis*, plum blossoms, pine trees, camphor trees, magnolias, and Chinese nanmu, showcasing the style of Sichuan gardens.²²

Orchid Garden covers an area of 880 square meters. The front features a tile-roofed gray wall with windows containing perforated flower patterns. After entering the round archway, a

²² Li, Yumei. "Research on Plant Landscape Space in Chengdu Parks: A Case Study of People's Park and Huanhuaxi Park." Southwest Jiaotong University, 2011.

cement tree-shaped square pavilion with a pool surrounds it. On the west and south sides of the pavilion, there are orchid stands with more than 28 species, including *Cymbidium* and *Phalaenopsis*, totaling over 900 pots of orchids. This orchid garden is the largest scenic garden of its kind in the Chengdu urban parks.

Bonsai Garden is located in the southern part of Shaocheng Garden within the park. It covers an area of 2600 square meters, including a resting corridor and a lotus pond. The pool's edge is constructed with rockeries, with *Mai Dong* (*Ophiopogon japonicus*) and azaleas planted around it. The pond hosts water lilies, lotus flowers, water chestnuts, umbrella grass, iris, and other aquatic plants. The garden is surrounded by lush trees, swaying bamboo, and a green shade, creating a peaceful environment. The garden exhibits over 200 bonsai plants year-round, including over 20 landscape bonsai and over 180 tree stump bonsai (Figure 4). The main tree species include elm, ginkgo, *Pinus tabulaeformis*, wisteria, *Adenium obesum*, and *Photinia*.²³



Figure 4: Men Playing Chess in Bonsai Garden
Source: Jiayi Li

²³ Li, Yumei. "Research on Plant Landscape Space in Chengdu Parks: A Case Study of People's Park and Huanhuaxi Park." Southwest Jiaotong University, 2011.

Popular Education Hall and People's Education Hall

The Popular Education Hall and People's Education Hall are two historically significant buildings within Chengdu People's Park, designated as municipal level-three cultural relics protection sites. Located in the central part of Shaocheng Garden, these structures have been preserved and renovated to serve contemporary purposes. They function as exhibition halls and meeting spaces for cultural exchange conferences, business meetings, and flower exhibitions (Figure 5). By maintaining these historical sites, the park continues to honor and preserve its cultural heritage while adapting to modern uses.²⁴



Figure 5: Exhibition about Bao Lu Movement
Source: Jiayi Li

²⁴ Qiu, Yusong. *Protection and Development of Urban Memory in Chengdu People's Park*. Chengdu University of Technology, 2017.

Bao Lu Memorial Monument, Bao Lu Memorial Museum, Yinxing Pavilion

Three areas serve as places for visitors to mourn and commemorate. The Bao Lu Memorial Monument is designed following China's national tradition of stupa-style architecture (Figure). It features a solemn and natural design with a strong sense of the times in a Chinese style. The monument consists of four parts: the pedestal, the base, the body, and the cap. It stands at a height of 31.86 meters, and its square brick and stone structure incorporates relief sculptures of locomotives and rails on all four sides. The province and city designated it as a patriotic education base for youth, providing historical and traditional education to the younger generation.²⁵

The exhibition hall (Yinxing Pavilion) is located at the end of the central axis of the monument. The entire exhibition hall covers an area of 900 square meters. The building features a solemn and dignified architectural style (Figure). It serves as a reminder of the Xinhai Bao Lu Movement, known in the West as the 1911 Revolution, which ended the Qing dynasty and led to the establishment of the Republic of China.²⁶

²⁵ Qiu, Yusong. *Protection and Development of Urban Memory in Chengdu People's Park*. Chengdu University of Technology, 2017.

²⁶ Ibid.



Figures 6 & 7: Bao Lu Memorial Monument & Yinxing Pavilion
Source: Jiayi Li

Children's Playground Area

This area is the primary playground for children. It features various play facilities, but most are outdated and have low utilization on weekdays, while school is in session. However, the playground gets very crowded on weekends and holidays. The playground often hosts activities to cultivate children's hand skills and imagination, attracting not only children but also their parents and young couples.



Figures 8&9: Facilities in Children’s Area
Source: Jiayi Li

2.4 HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGNATIONS

The park features one national-level cultural heritage site: the Monument to the Railway Protection Movement Martyrs of the Xinhai Revolution. Additionally, there are four city-level cultural heritage sites: the Popular Education Hall, the Public Education Hall, the Zhongzheng Library, and the Ginkgo Pavilion (Table 1).

Table 1: Details of Historical Buildings in People's Park
Source: Chengdu People's Park Management Office

Heritage Status	Building Name	Function
National Cultural Site	Monument to the Railway Protection Movement Martyrs of the Xinhai Revolution	Monument

City Cultural Site	Popular Education Hall	Exhibition Hall
	Public Education Hall	Exhibition Hall
	Zhongzheng Library	Park Management Office
	Ginkgo Pavilion	Memorial Hall for the Railway Protection Movement Martyrs
Historical Building	Heming Teahouse	Teahouse

The cultural heritage sites within the park are directly managed by the Qingyang District Cultural Heritage Management Office, with the park assisting in their maintenance. In routine management and maintenance, the funding for the upkeep of cultural heritage sites is minimal. Repair and hazard mitigation costs are directly requested by the park from the Chengdu Forestry and Park Bureau and completed in cooperation with the Cultural Heritage Management Office.

2.5 THE MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE'S PARK

The visitor number varies due to the season of the year, the weather, and the programs being hosted. People's Park receives approximately 3.2 million visitors annually. Daily visitor numbers are significantly influenced by weather conditions. On poor weather days, the park attracts 7,000 to 8,000 visitors, while on good weather days, it can reach up to 10,000 visitors. During weekends and flower exhibitions, the number of visitors can surge to between 20,000 and 30,000.²⁷

²⁷ Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute. *Revision of People's Park Plan in Chengdu*. Chengdu, Chengdu Landscape and Garden Planning and Design Institute, 2016.

The surrounding area of People's Park enjoys convenient transportation, with a well-developed road network and extensive public transportation options. The park's north gate is accessible via Metro Line 2. Additionally, six bus routes—5, 53, 70, 90, 126, and 340—provide direct access to the park's entrance. On the other hand, due to its proximity to the city center and its location at a major road network junction, the park experiences significant traffic congestion during peak hours.

The Park's revenue varies significantly, largely depending on the season and the commercial facilities, such as stalls and shops. To emphasize the public service functions and improve the landscape, the number of commercial facilities has been significantly reduced compared to previous years. The annual revenue ranges between 7 million and 8 million yuan, primarily sourced from the children's amusement park and the teahouses.

2.6 CURRENT USAGE OF PEOPLE'S PARK BY VISITORS

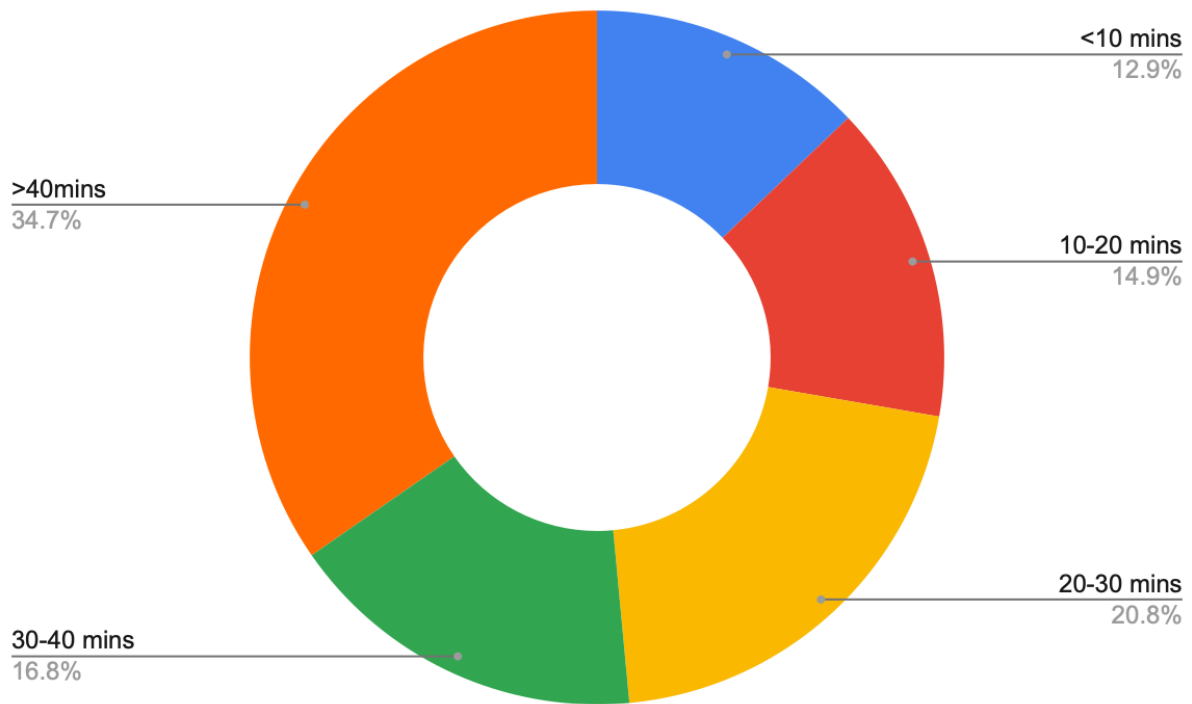


Figure 10: Duration of Travel to the Park

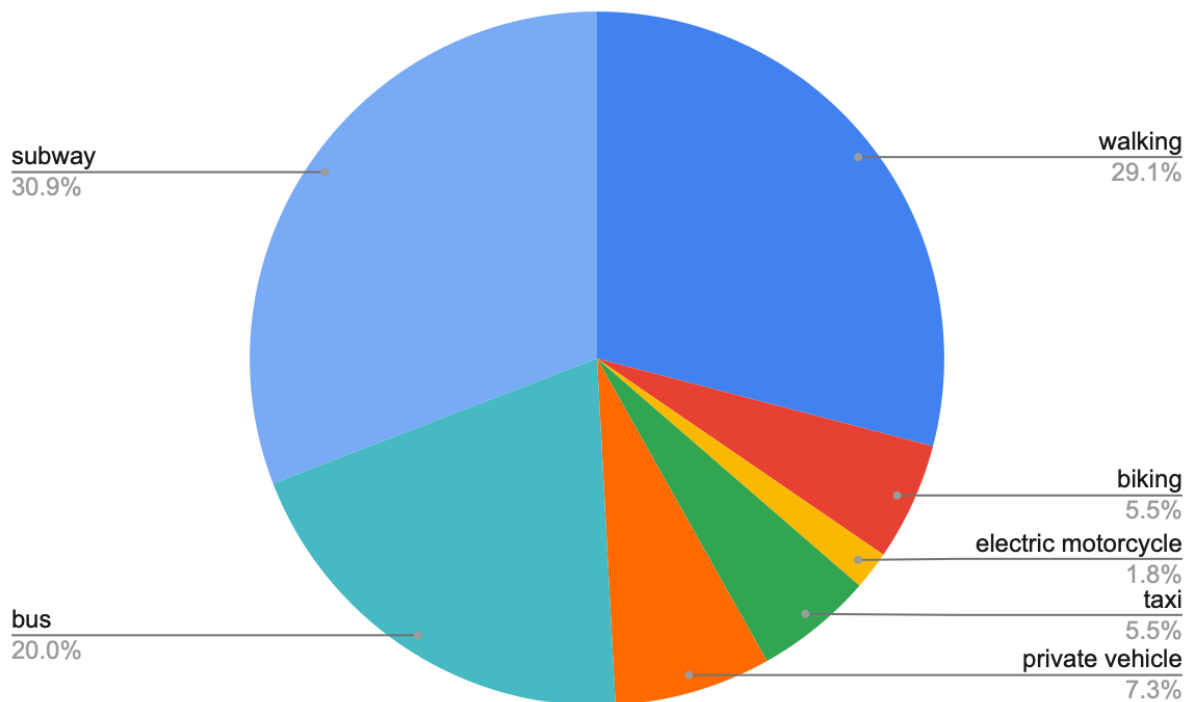


Figure 11: Transportation

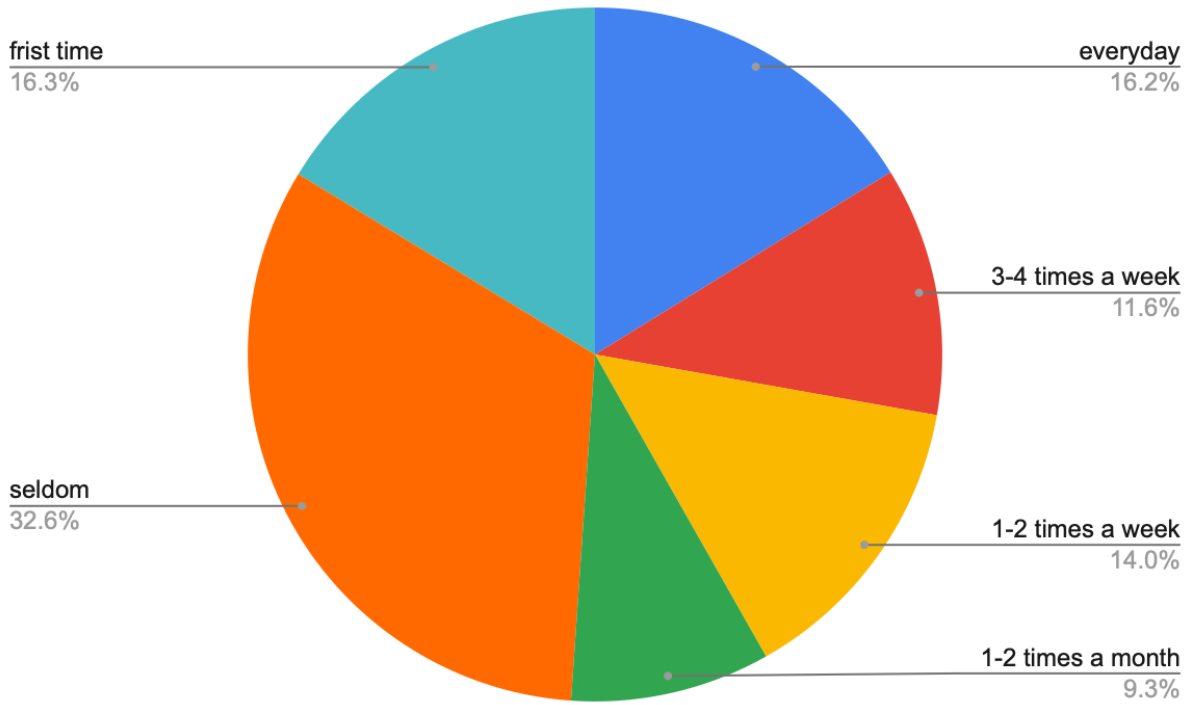


Figure 12: Frequency

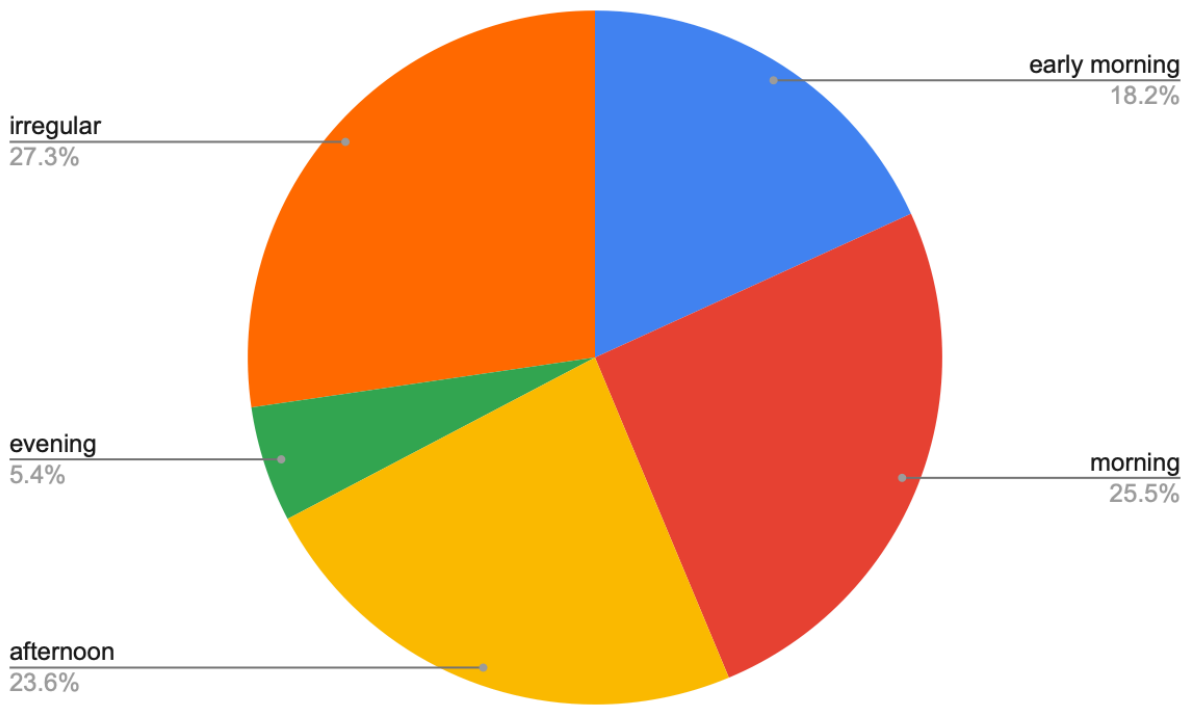


Figure 13: Time Period

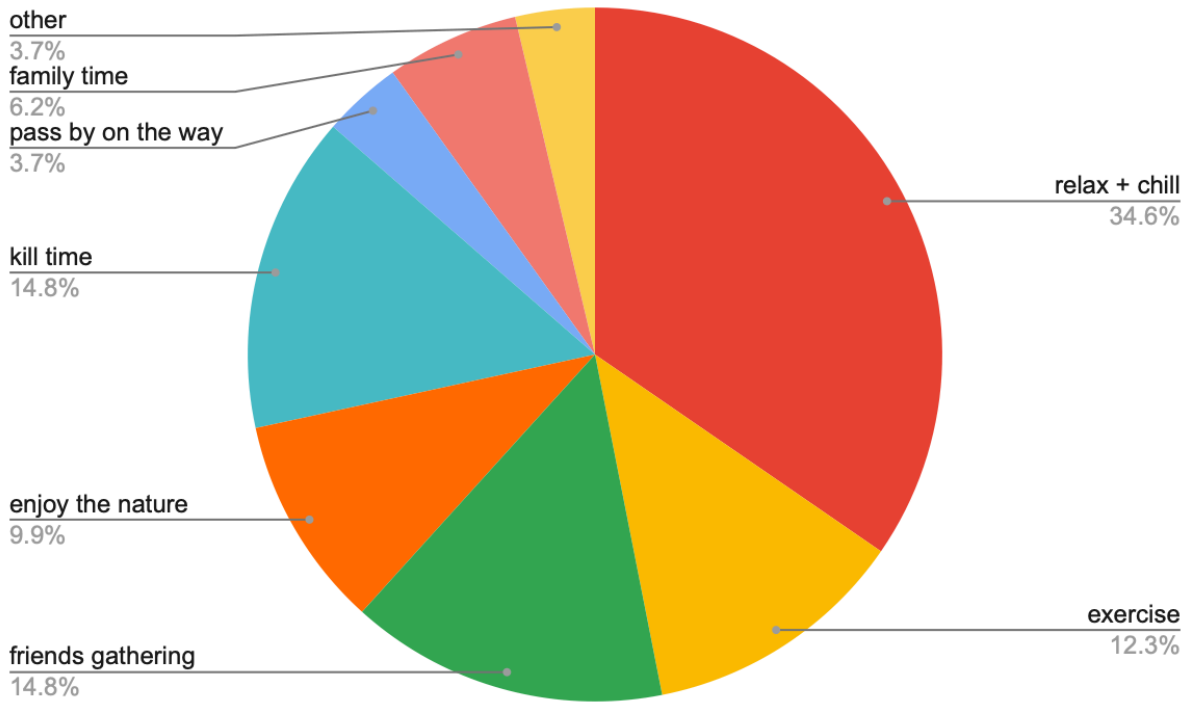


Figure 14: Purpose of Visiting

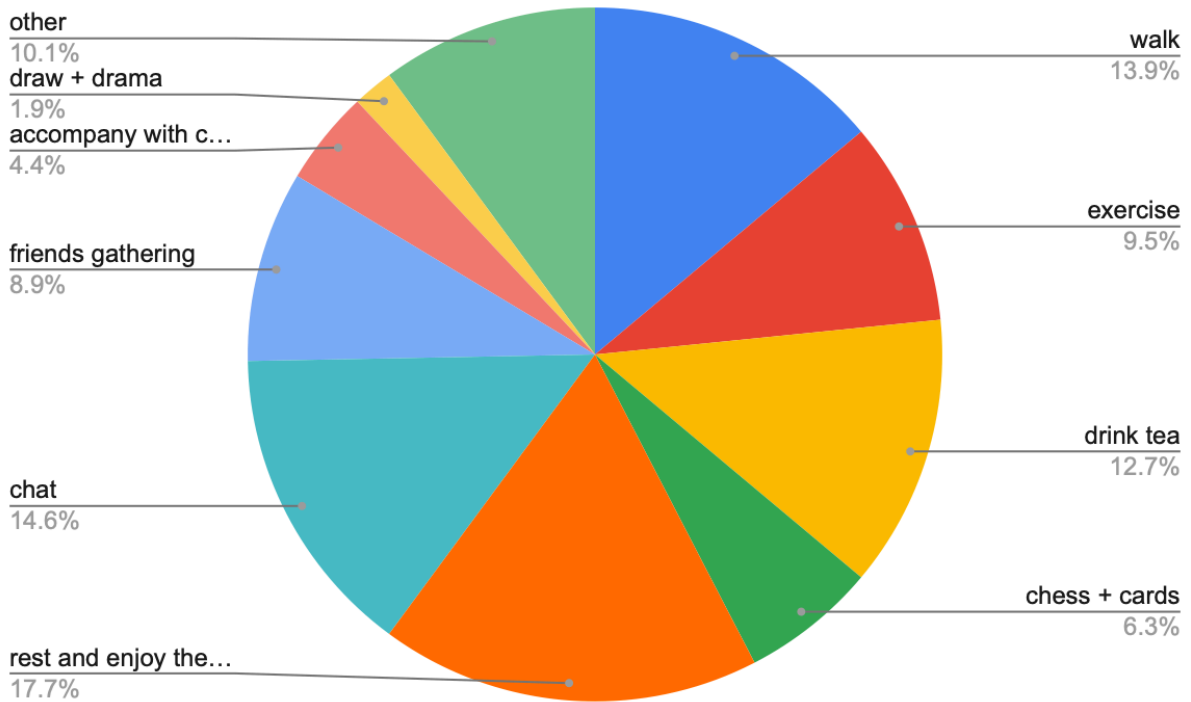


Figure 15: Activities in Park

Most visitors to the park have a travel time of over 40 minutes, while those within 10 minutes are the least. This phenomenon indicates that People's Park strongly appeals to long-distance visitors. This is due to the rich cultural heritage of the Park and its proximity to Tianfu Square and Kuanzhai Alley, both less than 1 kilometer away, making it a popular destination for out-of-town tourists. Additionally, People's Park is located in the CBD area, resulting in fewer nearby residents as short-distance visitors.

Regarding transportation, Line 2 of the subway has a station at People's Park, making it very convenient for visitors. As a result, 30.9% of long-distance visitors choose the subway, and another 20% opt for buses, accounting for half of the public transportation usage. Walking visitors make up 29.1%, indicating that People's Park is easily accessible, and visitors choose environmentally friendly modes of transportation.

Regarding visit frequency, 32.6% of visitors occasionally come for leisure, and combined with the 16.3% who are first-time visitors, nearly half of the visitors are non-regular, highlighting the park's appeal to those beyond the municipal service radius. Regarding visit timing, 27.3% of visitors come irregularly, suggesting spontaneous or non-habitual and guided tours. This is the highest percentage across all periods, confirming People's Park's strong attraction to visitors.²⁸

Static activities dominate, with an overall emphasis on recreational activities. In summary, People's Park strongly appeals to long-distance visitors, offers diverse transportation options, and focuses on traditional leisure and entertainment activities. The Park has achieved convenience, environmental friendliness, and meticulous safety management for its visitors.

²⁸ Chengdu People's Park Management Office. *Visitor Usage Status Questionnaire Survey*. 2019.

2.7 SIGNATURE ACTIVITIES

In the park's teahouse, bamboo chairs and low tables are arranged alongside copper teapots and lidded tea bowls, seamlessly blending with the lush greenery and tranquil lake to create an elegant ambiance. Elderly men and women sip tea and engage in lively conversations, embodying the park's traditional charm. Tourists recline in the bamboo chairs, indulging in the unique experience of professional ear cleaning. Meanwhile, matchmakers and parents eagerly converse in the matchmaking corner, their animated discussions adding to the park's leisurely and inviting atmosphere. People's Park embodies the authentic, natural lifestyle of Chengdu's residents. Today, this spirit has extended beyond the park and is reflected in the city's development philosophy. Everything is centered around the people to make their lives happier and more fulfilling.

Fifty-three-year-old Tan Jihe also loves People's Park. As a distinguished researcher at the Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences, a senior fellow at the Sichuan Provincial Government's Institute of Literature and History, and the president of the Sichuan Historical Society, Tan has been involved in numerous urban projects in Chengdu, including People's Park. Since the 1980s, he has been studying the cultural characteristics of People's Park. In his view, the park embodies the leisurely lifestyle and pioneering spirit of Chengdu's residents and is an important cultural symbol.

2.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF TEA TASTING & TEAHOUSE IN CHENGDU

The teahouse is an inseparable component of China's traditional culture and everyday existence, boasting a profound and extensive history. However, the latter half of the 20th century brought unprecedented turbulence to its narrative. Using 1976 as a pivotal moment, the trajectory of teahouses and public life diverged significantly. From 1950 to 1976, teahouses witnessed a decline in prosperity, only to experience a revival and thriving period after the reform era and opening up. The distinct developmental paths of teahouses and public life during these two phases reflect the overarching trends in Chinese politics, economy, and society.

During a significant period before the reform and opening up, radical policies compelled people to withdraw from public spaces. However, after the reforms, public life was rapidly restored. Post-1978, China's reform and opening up completely transformed the face of socialist China. Not only did widespread political, economic, and cultural liberation occur, but people's daily lives also regained freedom. The government not only allowed but encouraged the development of private enterprises. The progressively relaxed political, economic, and public life environment contributed to the revival of teahouses, cultural symbols enduring in Chengdu. In a sense, the return of teahouses can be seen as a representative symbol of the flourishing private small businesses after the opening. Some professions and means of livelihood that disappeared after 1949 quickly returned, and many people made a living through teahouses. Surprisingly, the revived professions did not significantly change their ways of earning a living. Occupations such as male and female servers, fortune tellers, ear cleaners, and shoe shiners remained busy with their respective businesses.

From the early 1950s to the late 1970s, especially during the Cultural Revolution, people withdrew from public spaces, finding a sense of security only in private spaces where they could speak freely. The reform and opening up policies created a relatively open political environment, improving public life. In teahouses, people of all ages, genders, professions, and education levels could enjoy leisure, making teahouses once again the most important social gathering places. Unlike the teahouses of the 1950s to the 1970s, those in the reform and opening up era are no longer tools for socialist propaganda. The loss of this function is, of course, a result of the emergence of traditional media (including newspapers, television, etc.) and the coming of the internet, which are powerful tools for the Party and the government. Therefore, teahouses became politically inconsequential, regaining their role as genuine leisure and entertainment venues where people had relative freedom in public spaces.

Political leniency provided an excellent opportunity for the revival of public spaces, starting with teahouses in the late 1970s. Like in the past, teahouses served as windows to the city, revealing the changes in the larger world. Thus, the teahouse life of the last two decades of the 20th century reflects the revival of public life under the socialist system, interwoven with the increasing diversification of society and the rise of consumer culture.

The prosperous revival of teahouses began in the late 1970s, coinciding with China's gradual shift from a planned economy to a market economy, abandoning the stigma attached to individual pursuit of profit. As the state loosened its grip on the economy, people were willing to take risks and confidently entered the market. Additionally, with the relaxation of state restrictions on public activities, people flocked to teahouses and similar establishments, driving the resurgence of teahouse culture and fostering the rise of consumer culture.

By the end of 1979, Chengdu already had 2,318 family-operated "private businesses," which increased to 7,242 a year later and surged to 16,659 by 1982.²⁹ As the government implemented increasingly lenient policies encouraging the development of private businesses between 1983 and 1985, anyone meeting the minimum requirements could obtain a business license, leading to a craze known as the "everyone in business" trend. Although this term may sound exaggerated, it reflects the societal trend of people eagerly venturing into entrepreneurial activities. By the end of 1985, the number of individual households reached 123,901. Although the growth rate of individual households in Chengdu slowed between 1986 and 1989, by 1990, Chengdu had 155,675 individual entrepreneurs, constituting 69% of all 224,225 enterprises.³⁰

The revival of teahouses not only stems from people's everyday needs but also results from economic development. An article in the *People's Daily* stated that in this rapidly evolving market economy, teahouses have become places for "business discussions and information exchange."³¹ A journalist mentioned that after a brief stay in a teahouse, he not only gained various information about the prices of fish, meat, and vegetables in the community but also learned about market trends between cities and even provinces. Some teahouses have effectively transformed into trade and market centers for commodities like steel, cement, automobiles, and other production materials.

In 1984, Chengdu Production Materials Service Company, recognizing the economic demands, established a trade market at the Heming Teahouse, conducting weekly transactions of production materials every Friday. Merchants, factory procurement officers, and raw material

²⁹ Yu, Yao. *Teahouse Folklore and the Life of Tea People: Chengdu Teahouses from the Perspective of Common People*. Shanghai University, 2007.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

suppliers gathered for transactions every Friday morning until the government closed this market several years later.³²

One of Chengdu's most renowned production materials trade markets was the “Friday Tea Gathering” at the Chengbei Gymnasium Teahouse, also known as the “Chengdu Production Materials Trade Fair.” This teahouse, occupying 300 square meters, was packed with purchasers and suppliers from Chengdu, neighboring counties, and various provinces during the tea gatherings. On tea gathering days, the walls and pillars of the teahouse were covered with newspaper-sized white papers containing information about unit names, material specifications, supply and demand details, and contact names, some even specifying prices. People could peruse the descriptions of various materials and sit down to negotiate business deals. Businesses could become members for a modest fee. In just the first three quarters of 1987, hundreds of enterprises contributed to a transaction volume exceeding 2 billion yuan at the tea gathering. This tea gathering continued for many years.³³

Teahouses also served as offices for various “briefcase companies.” The rise of these companies occurred in the 1980s during the peak of the so-called “everyone in business” trend. Many small companies had only one person, lacking an office and employees, who carried a briefcase while seeking business opportunities. Hence, they were playfully referred to as “briefcase companies.” Teahouses provided an ideal place for the bosses of these companies to conduct transactions and handle business affairs.

In the latter half of the 20th century, the role and significance of teahouses in urban areas underwent significant changes. Compared to the late Qing and Republican eras, contemporary

³² Zhu, Lei. *Research on the Form and Function of Teahouses as Spatial Media: An Analysis Based on Chengdu's Heming Teahouse*. Sichuan University, 2021.

³³ Zhu, Lei. *Research on the Form and Function of Teahouses as Spatial Media: An Analysis Based on Chengdu's Heming Teahouse*. Sichuan University, 2021.

Chinese cities now have more public spaces. In this sense, as a public space, teahouses are places for leisure and entertainment and have been genuine markets and business venues since the late Qing Dynasty. Throughout the 20th century, despite changes in politics, economy, society, and culture, the market function of teahouses has never been replaced, despite the emergence of many other public spaces and advancements in commercial technologies and facilities.

2.9 THE PARK'S MATCHMAKING CORNER

The matchmaking corner in Chengdu People's Park has evolved from a simple social and recreational area into a bustling hub of activity. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, as urbanization accelerated and traditional social interactions changed, people's lives became more fast-paced. To adapt to these changes, parents gathered informally to exchange information about their children, hoping to find ideal partners.

Initially, these gatherings were sporadic and lacked a fixed location or specific time. However, as more and more parents joined in, a regular meeting spot began to form, eventually becoming a dedicated matchmaking corner. Parents found this method efficient and convenient; thus, the matchmaking corner grew in size and organization.

Today, the matchmaking corner is a unique and lively feature of Chengdu People's Park, attracting numerous parents and visitors. Parents come with handwritten or printed profiles of their children, detailing age, height, education, occupation, income, and sometimes including photos. They display these profiles on makeshift boards or hang them from trees, creating a vibrant and bustling scene (Figure 16 & 17).

In this corner, parents engage in animated discussions, exchange opinions, and share experiences. They browse each other's profiles while promoting their children's qualities, all hoping to find suitable matches. The atmosphere is busy yet hopeful, filled with anticipation and optimism.



Figures 16 & 17: Matchmaking Corner
Source: Jiayi Li

The matchmaking corner serves as a place for parents to seek partners for their children and as a platform for social interaction and community building. It reflects the importance of family and marriage in local culture and showcases the blend of traditional values and modern lifestyles. In the fast-paced city life, the matchmaking corner offers a space where people can slow down and focus on familial relationships, making it a fascinating and culturally rich part of the Park.³⁴

³⁴ Sun, Tingting. *The Matchmaking Corner as Public Space: A Case Study of the Matchmaking Corner in People's Park, Shanghai*. East China University of Science and Technology, 2018.

2.10 THE ANNUAL CHRYSANTHEMUM EXHIBITION

The Chrysanthemum Exhibition at Chengdu People's Park is a yearly celebration with a rich history and deep cultural significance. Beginning in the 1950s, the exhibition was a modest event, providing a delightful floral retreat for the citizens of Chengdu. Over the years, it has grown in scale and prominence, becoming a major cultural event each autumn.³⁵

In the early days, the exhibition featured a limited variety of chrysanthemums. With the advancements in horticultural techniques and the promotion of flower cultivation, the range and number of chrysanthemums on display increased significantly. Horticulturists have utilized grafting and hybridization techniques to cultivate chrysanthemums of various shapes and vibrant colors, greatly enhancing the exhibition's visual appeal and artistic value.

By the 1980s, the Chrysanthemum Exhibition at Chengdu People's Park had become a well-established event. It featured not only local varieties but also outstanding chrysanthemums from across the country and even from overseas. The exhibition layout became more elaborate, with horticulturists creating stunning floral landscapes by combining chrysanthemums with garden art through intricate designs and arrangements.

In the 21st century, the exhibition evolved into a significant cultural brand for Chengdu, drawing large crowds yearly. The exhibition's content has continuously expanded to include traditional chrysanthemum displays, educational areas, interactive experiences, and cultural showcases. Visitors can enjoy the diverse chrysanthemum varieties while participating in activities that teach them about cultivation techniques and the cultural significance of chrysanthemums.

³⁵ Hao, Weiping. "Chengdu Hosts the 28th City Flower Exhibition." *China Flowers & Horticulture*, no. 21, 2012, p. 35.

Today, the Chrysanthemum Exhibition at Chengdu People's Park is a highly anticipated event each autumn. As visitors enter the park, they are greeted by a sea of chrysanthemums in various hues—yellow, white, red, and purple—all vying for attention (Figure 18). The meticulous designs and themed flower beds, featuring motifs like dragons and phoenixes, floral baskets, and even pavilions made of chrysanthemums, are truly mesmerizing.³⁶

The Park also features an educational area where visitors can learn about the different chrysanthemum varieties, cultivation methods, and the historical and cultural background of the flowers. Interactive activities, such as photography contests and flower-arranging workshops, allow visitors to engage with the exhibition deeply. The Park hosts cultural performances and traditional activities during the exhibition, such as opera shows and tea ceremonies, adding a rich cultural layer to the floral display. The chrysanthemums are illuminated at night, creating a magical atmosphere that offers a different perspective of the exhibition.

The Chrysanthemum Exhibition at Chengdu People's Park is not just a floral feast but a cultural festival showcasing chrysanthemums' beauty and resilience. It reflects the community's love for nature and life, becoming a beloved autumn tradition for the people of Chengdu.

³⁶ Hao, Weiping. "Chengdu Hosts the 28th City Flower Exhibition." *China Flowers & Horticulture*, no. 21, 2012, p. 35.



Figure 18: Chrysanthemum Exhibition in 2020
Source: <https://www.meipian.cn/3a7ab4ld>

2.11 THE ROLE OF THE PARK IN PATRIOTIC EDUCATION

To promote and uphold fine traditions, pass on the revolutionary spirit, reinforce spiritual strength, and enhance awareness of the Party and its members while consciously practicing the core socialist values, the Chengdu People's Park hosts an annual lecture series on the history of the War of Resistance Against Japan. This public lecture series features the renowned Bashu cultural scholar Yuan Tingdong, who delivers a talk titled “Chengdu During the Eight-Year War of Resistance,” recounting the historical stories of Chinese military and civilian efforts during the war.³⁷

³⁷ 成都市人民公园 (*Chengdu People's Park Official Website*), www.cdpeoplespark.cn/go-c99.htm.

Eighty-three years ago, soldiers from Sichuan left for the frontlines after holding a mobilization rally at the Chengdu People's Park. Yuan Tingdong vividly describes the hardships endured during the war, highlighting how Chengdu supported the frontlines while serving as a major rear area despite suffering numerous bombings. Today, the People's Park, lush with flowers and greenery, stands in stark contrast to the devastation it faced under Japanese bombing campaigns. Yuan's detailed and emotionally charged narrative brings to life the courageous sacrifices and heroic struggles of the soldiers, earning heartfelt applause from the audience.³⁸

Chengdu People's Park is a comprehensive park that integrates gardening, culture, cultural relics protection, patriotic education, and recreational activities. Within the park stands the Sichuan Army War Martyrs Monument, built in 1944 to commemorate the more than 600,000 Sichuan soldiers who perished in the war. The monument, facing northeast, consists of a base, a stele, and a statue, reaching a height of approximately eight meters and covering an area of about sixty square meters. The statue depicts a young soldier in a thin military uniform, with a resolute expression, wearing an army cap, carrying a large knife and straw hat on his back, with grenades hanging on his chest, and holding a bayoneted rifle. This portrayal symbolizes the fierce resistance and sacrifice of the Sichuan soldiers, serving as a brilliant emblem of China's war history. Commonly referred to by locals as the "Unknown Hero Monument," this monument was listed among the third batch of national-level war memorials and sites on September 1, 2020. On related commemorative days, people from all walks of life in Sichuan spontaneously gather at the monument to pay tribute to and remember the fallen heroes (Figure 19).³⁹

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ 成都市人民公园 (*Chengdu People's Park Official Website*), www.cdpeoplespark.cn/go-c99.htm.



Figure 19: Flowers in front of The Monument
Source: Jiayi Li

2.12 CONCLUDING ANALYSIS OF PARK ACTIVITIES

As a crucial component of urban public space, parks can address several needs. In this case, the signature activities are more focused and can be viewed as reconfiguring park functions. Chendu's People's Park serves as a recreational space, and exhibition space, and a source of social education to strengthen social control. Residents and visitors engage in passive recreational activities, appreciating the beautiful landscapes and the freedom to enter these public spaces, facilitating social interactions and contributing to harmonious social relationships. The Park also serves as a cultural space, integrating the historic buildings and monuments.

CHAPTER THREE: XINGLONG LAKE PARK IN CHENGDU

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The second case study, Xinglong Lake Park, is located within the Chengdu Science City in the Tianfu New Area, governed by Chengdu. It is also located on the eastern side of the central axis of Tianfu Avenue in the southern part of Chengdu (as shown in Figure 20). The park is bounded by Lakeside Road, encompassing Xinglong Lake and the surrounding lakeside scenic area, with a total area of approximately 420 hectares (6402.25 acres). The water area covers about 286 hectares (4216.49 acres), with an east-west length of 2500 meters and a north-south width ranging from 600 to 1700 meters. The lake has a storage capacity exceeding 10 million cubic meters. This chapter discusses the planning rationale for the development of this new lake and the park that encompasses it, the transformation of the landscape into a lake and park features,

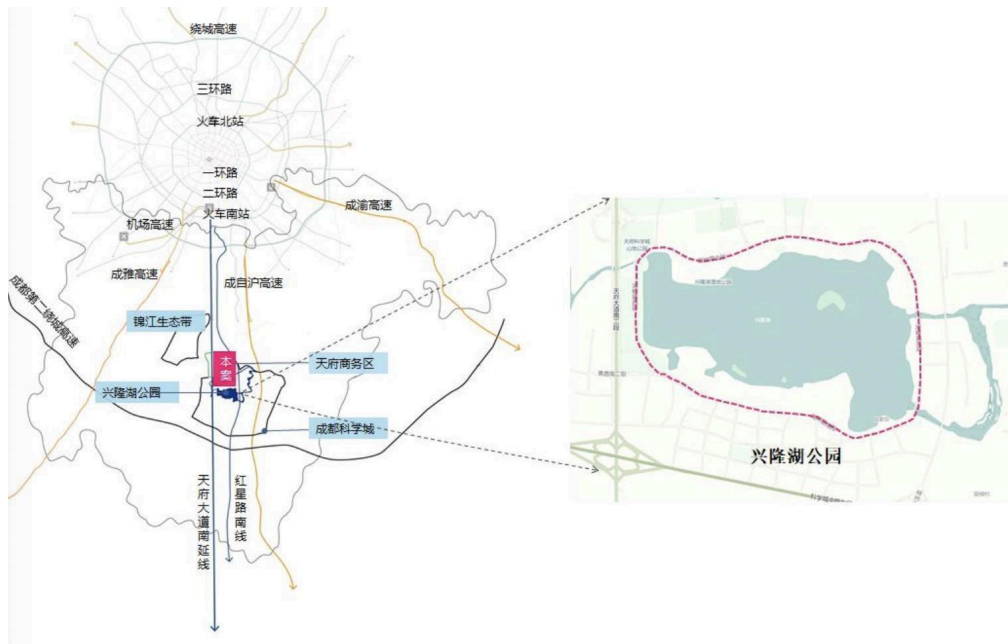


Figure 20: Location of Xinglong Lake Park
Source: Zhongwei Guo

3.2 THE ECOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

In terms of climate, Tianfu New Area is located in a subtropical monsoon humid climate zone characterized by concurrent rain and heat, abundant sunlight and warmth, frequent cloudiness and fog, distinct seasons, and a long frost-free period. The soil within the region includes paddy soil, alluvial soil, and purple soil, providing favorable conditions for cultivation.⁴⁰ The terrain is comprised of gentle hills and terraces.

The area is crisscrossed by rivers and has a well-developed water system, primarily consisting of tributaries of the Yangtze River, including the Minjiang and Tuojiang River systems. The main rivers include the Minjiang, Jinjiang, Luxi, and Xijiang Rivers and the Longquan Lake-Sancha Lake. Other notable waters flowing through Tianfu New Area include the Dongfeng Canal, Fu River, Tiaodeng River, Jiang'an River, Jinjiang, Nan River, Luxi River, and Chishui River.

Tianfu New Area is characterized by its mountain-enclosed and water-enriched landscape, forming an ecological pattern of two lakes, three mountains, and four rivers.

⁴⁰ Guo, Zhongwei. *Research on Park Green Spaces in Tianfu New Area Based on Landscape Performance Evaluation: A Case Study of Xinglong Lake Park*. 2021.

3.3 THE RECENT DEVELOPMENT PLANS

In the history of park and green space development in Tianfu New Area, four key plans have provided relevant guidelines for the development of parks and green spaces. These plans are:

1. “Overall Plan for Tianfu New Area, Sichuan Province (2010-2030)” (2011)
2. “Chengdu Green Space System Plan (2013-2020)” (2015)
3. “Chengdu Urban Master Plan (2016-2035)” (2018)
4. “Chengdu Green Space System Plan (2019-2035)” (2020)

Against the backdrop of new urbanization, the 2011 “Overall Plan for Tianfu New Area, Sichuan Province (2010-2030)” proposed the construction of an ecological green space system structure featuring “one zone, two wedges, and eight belts.” This system divided the park into ecological zones, green wedges, scenic spots, other green spaces, urban parks, and greenways. Regarding landscape development, the overall structure of the new area was planned as “two axes, four belts, nine zones, and multiple points.” Regarding land use layout (as shown in Figure), the plan designated an area of 96 square kilometers for parks and green spaces (see Table below), laying the foundation for large-scale park construction in the future.⁴¹

In 2014, Tianfu New Area was elevated to a national-level new area. Guided by the innovative concept of national garden city ecological construction, the 2015 “Chengdu Green Space System Plan (2013-2020)” established a green space layout structure characterized by “one belt, two wedges, nine corridors, four cores, and a dense network of points.” The plan included four city-level comprehensive parks, eleven urban area-level parks (each covering an

⁴¹ Chengdu Park City Construction Leading Group, editor. *Theoretical Exploration of New Models of Park City Construction*. Sichuan People's Publishing House, 2019, p. 505.

area greater than 30 hectares), no fewer than thirty-one integrated parks for urban and industrial units (each 20-30 hectares), and 280 community parks.

With the introduction of the “Belt and Road Initiative” and the “Yangtze River Economic Belt” strategy, the 2018 “Chengdu Urban Master Plan (2016-2035)” focused on measures to improve the quality and stability of the ecosystem. The plan proposed an ecological pattern of “two mountains, two networks, two rings, and six zones,” further emphasizing the critical role of Tianfu New Area in ecological structure formation.

Following the introduction of the “park city” concept, the 2020 “Chengdu Park City Green Space System Plan” integrated this concept throughout and incorporated public health considerations, highlighting the importance of “sponge city” designs within park green spaces. For the Tianfu New Area, the plan included fifteen parks (totaling 755 hectares) and four specialized parks (totaling 239 hectares), focusing on strengthening the protection of the Xinglong Lake area. This version of the plan reveals both the current incomplete status of Tianfu New Area's park city green space system and the higher demands for sustainable, high-quality, and precise park design in future developments.

3.4 RELEVANT PLANS AND REGULATIONS

In the urban master plans, the "Overall Plan for Tianfu New Area, Chengdu (2010-2030)" (2015 edition) and the "Chengdu Urban Master Plan (2016-2035)" have both made significant directives regarding the Xinglong Lake area.

The first underscores the importance of Xinglong Lake in constructing the new area. The plan positions the Chengdu direct governance are at the core of the “one zone (Central Business

District), one city (Innovation Science City), one belt (Jinjiang Ecological Belt), and two towns” strategy within the industrial function positioning and overall spatial layout of Chengdu's “one city and six districts.” The Innovation Science City, located in the industrial innovation and R&D functional area, is planned around Xinglong Lake, covering an area of approximately 7 square kilometers. Moreover, the green space system plan emphasizes the construction of “one lake, one belt, and two parks” as the planning focus. This involves creating an integrated, networked ecological green space system based on Longquan Mountain, Pengzu Mountain, and wedge-shaped green spaces, combined with bodies of water like Jinjiang and Luxi River, natural mountains, valley green spaces, and ecological isolation zones.

The "Chengdu Urban Master Plan (2016-2035)" further clarifies the ecological functions of Xinglong Lake, proposing to designate it and the surrounding areas as major urban parks adjacent to the waterfront corridor and surrounded by multiple wetlands and parks, leveraging its natural advantage of being encircled by mountains and water. This establishes a layout that radiates green public spaces and ecological corridors from the “urban ecological kidney,” significantly enhancing roles such as greening the landscape, rainwater collection, environmental protection, and ecological isolation.

3.5 GREEN SPACE SYSTEM PLANNING AND ITS REGULATIONS

In the green space system planning, the “Chengdu Green Space System Plan (2013-2020)” and the “Chengdu Park City Green Space System Plan (2019-2030)” have both made significant directives regarding the Xinglong Lake area.

The “Chengdu Green Space System Plan (2013-2020)” emphasizes the crucial role of Xinglong Lake Park in creating a green landscape pattern and constructing green ecology. It proposes a layout structure of “nine corridors and four cores,” with the “four cores” referring to four city-level comprehensive parks, one of which is Xinglong Lake Park.

The Plan also specifies related green space construction indicators and underscores the importance of ecological protection in the Xinglong Lake area. The Plan states that the green space system planning for Tianfu New Area requires a water surface rate $\geq 6\%$, a forest coverage rate $\geq 35\%$, an ecological corridor width ≥ 100 meters, a wildlife habitat area $\geq 10\%$, a 500-meter radius of park green space coverage 100%, and ecological water and green area accounting for 72.5% of the total area.

The green space system planning for the Chengdu direct governance area of Tianfu New Area, Xinglong Lake, and its surrounding green spaces are part of the internal green corridors. The regional green space planning explicitly calls for “strengthening the protection of the Xinglong Lake area, managing it according to the 'Chengdu Xinglong Lake Area Ecological Protection Regulations,' ensuring that the scale of ecological land in the Xinglong Lake area does not decrease, and focusing on the protection and restoration of river, lake, and wetland water ecosystems. This will create urban sponge bodies and build urban ecological zones.”⁴²

In 2016, Chengdu issued the “Chengdu Xinglong Lake Area Ecological Protection Regulations” (hereinafter referred to as the “Regulations”). These regulations encompass the 14.04 square kilometers of the Xinglong Lake area—comprising the 11.62 square kilometers of Xinglong Lake, Luxi River, and their surrounding ecological land as determined by the overall

⁴² Chengdu Park City Construction Leading Group, editor. *Theoretical Exploration of New Models of Park City Construction*. Sichuan People's Publishing House, 2019, p. 526.

plan for Sichuan Tianfu New Area, and 2.42 square kilometers of development land—bringing this area under legislative protection.

The Regulations define planning control, land use, and implementation guidelines. For example, when implementing ecological projects related to green spaces, water bodies, and landscapes, the area occupied by service-oriented supporting facilities must not exceed 2% of the total ecological land area. Additionally, the area occupied by vegetation and water bodies must not be less than 80% of the total area of the upper platform land. These regulations apply to the area's construction, management, protection, and supervision activities.

Site Transformation

Initially, the site of Xinglong Lake consisted only of the Luxi River and a valley depression with low-lying terrain. The area often became a large flood retention and diversion zone during summer due to heavy rains and poor downstream drainage. In 2012, to meet the planning and construction needs of Tianfu New Area and because the site had the geomorphological and geological conditions suitable for damming and lake formation, the planning called for a landscape layout of “one lake, one center, six peninsulas, and an ecological island chain.”⁴³

Construction officially began in November 2013. The site met water storage standards in early 2014 through artificial excavation and expansion. Water was introduced from the Luxi River, a tributary of the Minjiang River system, forming the initial shape of what is now Xinglong Lake.

Subsequently, a series of hydraulic and ecological engineering projects were carried out for Xinglong Lake. These included constructing the upstream wetland ecosystem of the old Luxi

⁴³ Zeng, Jiuli, et al. "Exploration and Practice of Planning and Building a Park City in Chengdu." *Urban Planning*, vol. 44, no. 8, 2020, pp. 112-119.

River channel to purify water quality, building a new water diversion pipeline project to bring water from the Dongfeng Canal on the eastern side, and connecting and ecologically managing the water systems of the Jiajia and Miaozi Gully areas. A new flood diversion channel was also constructed to achieve flood distribution.

By this point, the hydrological layout of Xinglong Lake and its surrounding areas was largely formed. Today, Xinglong Lake has three inlets and one outlet, with an average water depth of about 2.5-3 meters and the deepest point reaching 18 meters.

3.6 TOPOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

The terrain of Xinglong Lake Park features a lower elevation on the interior and a higher elevation on the exterior, but it is relatively flat overall. As shown in Figure 21, the water area of Xinglong Lake Park has a base elevation of approximately 459-470 meters, with a gentle slope mostly between 0-3 degrees. The land area has an elevation of about 470-496 meters, with slopes generally ranging from 2-8 degrees. The rainwater that might lead to flooding drains into the lake.

The northern side of the site features Nanshan Mountain, which rises to about 23 meters with a maximum elevation of around 496 meters. The slopes here are somewhat steeper, with the steepest areas exceeding 8 degrees.

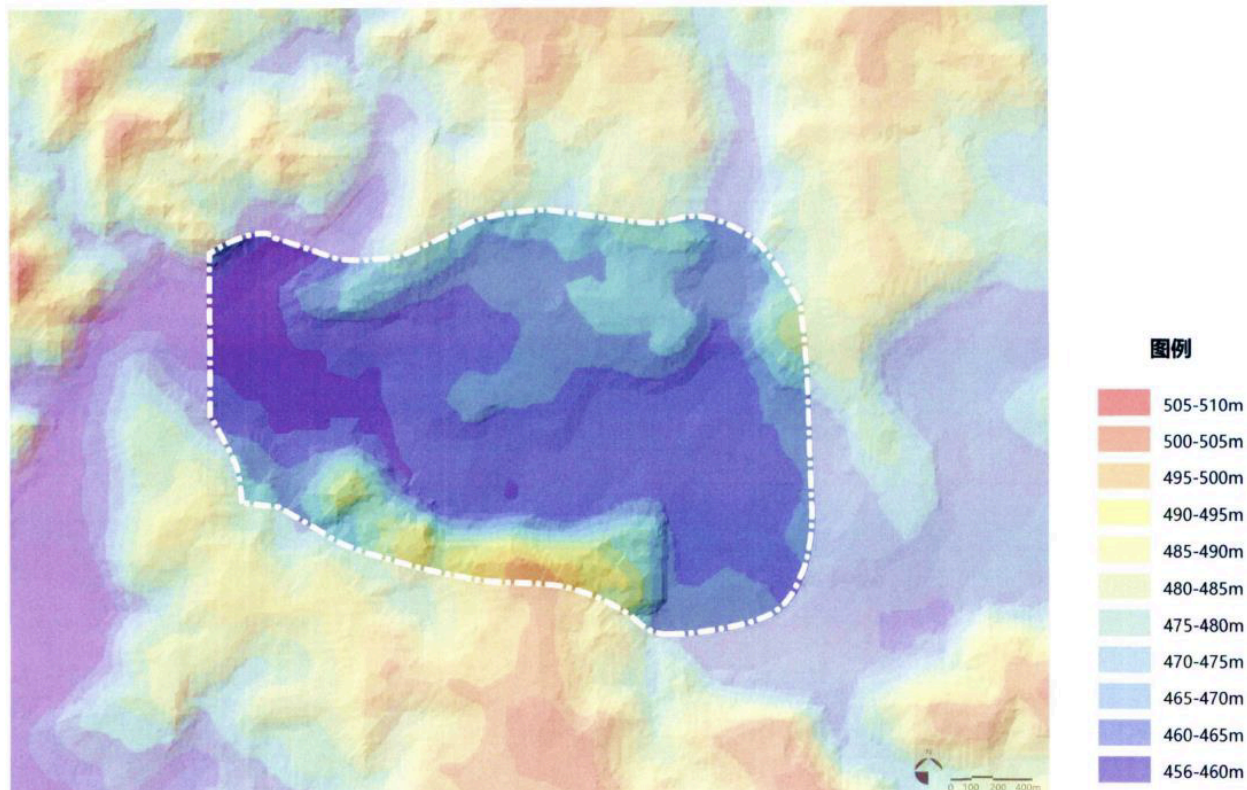


Figure 21: Xinglong Lake Park Terrain Analysis
Source: Sichuan University

3.7 VEGETATION CHARACTERISTICS

The greening area of Xinglong Lake Park is approximately 367.06 hectares, including the 286 hectares of the lake area (Figure 22). The forest coverage rate is about 12%, and the landscape construction area is approximately 159.25 hectares. The park has about 15,696 trees planted, with native tree species accounting for approximately 63.13%. Within the Park, evergreen trees make up 81% of the total tree population. By comparison, deciduous trees account for about 19%, resulting in a ratio of about 4:1. Broadleaf trees constitute around 86% of the trees, with coniferous trees making up about 14%, leading to a ratio of approximately

17:3. Green-leaved trees dominate with a 95% share, compared to 5% for colored-leaf trees, resulting in a ratio of about 19:1.⁴⁴



Figure 22: Satellite Map of Xinglong Lake
Source: Google Map

3.8 FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The entire Xinglong Lake area undertakes core functions such as technological innovation, international exchange, and ecological leisure. Xinglong Lake Park mainly fulfills ecological, landscape, recreational, flood control, and irrigation functions. Additionally, the Park serves as a city showcase, blending urban and green spaces harmoniously. As a popular tourist

⁴⁴ Xue, Xuexuan, and Zhang Mingjian. "Chengdu Creates a New Model for Park City Construction." *China Construction Informatization*, vol. 093, no. 14, 2019, pp. 40-43.

destination, Xinglong Lake Park hosts major city events, regularly organizing sports competitions and cultural performances. Beyond these roles, the Park meets the needs of the public for relaxation, entertainment, physical fitness, and cultural and artistic activities.

3.9 SOCIAL PERFORMANCE SURVEY OF XINGLONG LAKE PARK

The questionnaire was created by students from the School of Environment at Sichuan University. A total of 196 surveys were conducted over four sessions between June and July 2020. After excluding 7 invalid questionnaires, 189 valid responses were collected, resulting in an effective questionnaire rate of 96.43%.

Specifically, the first field survey conducted on June 16, 2020 (Tuesday) resulted in 29 interviews, with 28 valid responses. The second field survey on June 20, 2020 (Saturday) resulted in 63 interviews, with 62 valid responses. The third field survey on July 5, 2020 (Sunday) resulted in 59 interviews, with 57 valid responses. The fourth field survey on July 6, 2020 (Monday) resulted in 45 interviews, with 42 valid responses.⁴⁵

According to the field survey results, 89% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their recreational experience, indicating that their visit was worthwhile and that they plan to visit frequently. Since its official opening to the public in July 2016, Xinglong Lake Park has received an average of over 300 daily visitors. During peak holiday periods, the number of visitors can even exceed 10,000.

Survey data shows that 75% of respondents engaged in three or more types of activities within the park. Visitors can walk, cycle (renting shared bikes or bicycles for two or four

⁴⁵ Sichuan University. *Social Performance Survey of Xinglong Lake Park*. 2020.

people), run, play basketball, or skateboard for fitness activities. For leisure activities, many visitors camp, picnic, fly kites, walk dogs, and take photographs. Additionally, 83% of respondents reported enjoying the scenery and interacting with others in the park. Different groups have distinct activities: office workers in the vicinity mainly rest, enjoy the scenery, socialize, and exercise in the mornings; nearby residents mostly walk, walk their dogs, run, and enjoy the scenery; residents from other areas of the city primarily camp, picnic, take photographs, and enjoy the scenery. Field observations indicate that most visitors are concentrated in the northern and western parts of the park, while the eastern and southern parts have fewer visitors and lower landscape usage.

According to the survey data, 34% of respondents felt that the activity facilities were adequate. In contrast, the remaining respondents indicated the facilities were somewhat limited, specifically noting a lack of fitness equipment and children's play facilities.

Survey data shows that 64% of respondents believe the park facilitates social interactions. Some nearby residents mentioned occasionally meeting their neighbors in the park, enhancing neighborhood interactions. Some office workers in the vicinity reported that they frequently walk or run with colleagues in the park, and sometimes company team-building activities are held there.

Detailed survey data analysis shows that 72% of respondents were satisfied with the lighting facilities, 65% with the rest facilities, and 82% with the sanitation facilities. The availability of vending carts, kiosks, vending machines, and drinking water facilities greatly enhances visitor convenience. Additionally, installing solar-powered smart benches in the park improves the leisure experience for visitors. Among those who were dissatisfied, the most

The data indicates that 75% of respondents feel they have benefited from physical exercise. The 7220-meter lakeside greenway offers opportunities for walking, cycling, and running. Additionally, the basketball courts on the park's west side are heavily used and highly efficient.

Survey data shows that 82% of nearby residents believe the construction of Xinglong Lake Park has enhanced their sense of belonging. The international community's development around Xinglong Lake is progressing rapidly, adhering to international standards. Efforts are focused on creating a "One Park, Two Circles" framework (one park refers to the park city, and two circles refer to the high-quality industrial eco-circle and the high-quality living circle), continually optimizing the international business environment and improving the global community service system. Most respondents felt they could relax and relieve stress in the park. The expansive water surface, swaying reeds, blooming flowers, and the seamless horizon between water and sky all contribute to an uplifting mood.

Survey data indicates that 93% of respondents feel the area's security and environment have improved. Given the large water surface area of Xinglong Lake, the park implements emergency plans and conducts regular safety drills to ensure visitor safety. Security personnel patrol the park 24 hours daily during peak holiday periods, following a twice-daily reporting system.

Only about half of the respondents have heard of or participated in events held at Xinglong Lake. Among the participants, 78% believe that the planning and organization of the venue have improved through hosting festivals, sports, cultural, and exhibition activities, enriching their lives and increasing their interest. Xinglong Lake has hosted over a hundred events, mostly cultural and sports activities, including marathons, cycling, photography,

volunteering, and tree planting. Events range from small competitions like night runs and hiking to major events such as international half marathons and national fitness competitions (as shown in Table). The organizing bodies include government agencies, companies, schools, and communities. In January 2020, the Tianfu New Area Xinglong Lake Regular Activity Leadership Office further optimized and streamlined the registration and reservation process, launching an online reservation system to facilitate the organization of various activities at Xinglong Lake.

Table 2: Overview of Selected Events Held at Xinglong Lake Park

Date	Event
2017.09	Chengdu International Marathon
2018.05	"Dynamic China" 2018 Tianfu New Area Park City Half Marathon
2018.07	"2018 Beautiful Countryside, Ecological New Area" Theme Photography Exhibition
2019.04	"4·22" World Earth Day Theme Event - Xinglong Lake Environmental Run
2019.10	"Benevolent Tianfu, Boundless Love" Charity Event
2020.07	Chengdu Greenway Science Popularization Theme Photography Competition Xinglong Lake Creative Exchange Event

The role of volunteers is very important. During holidays, Xinglong Lake Park frequently organizes volunteer teams to promote various forms of civil behavior, such as polite reminders, civilized touring, responsible photography, guided behavior, public awareness, and respectful dining. Volunteers also pick up litter along the way and discourage uncivil behaviors (as shown in Figure 24). In December 2018, the National Civilized Tourism Volunteer Conference was held at Xinglong Lake (Figure 25). Around 3,000 volunteers from 60 groups, including volunteers, businesses, students, and social organizations, jointly advocated for

civilized tourism. More and more people are joining the volunteer teams, and an increasing number of tourists are becoming conscious practitioners, disseminators, and promoters of civilized tourism, making it a growing trend.

The Park uses educational signage to explain ecological treatment methods, including rain gardens, wetland concepts, and plant information. The Tianfu New Area Park City Exhibition Hall presents the theoretical origins, phased research results, and new development paradigms of the park city concept. According to survey data, 79% of respondents are satisfied with the educational activities in the park. Sixty-five percent have visited the Tianfu New Area Park City Exhibition Hall. Through the explanations provided by the guides, 80% of visitors gained a more systematic understanding of the new era park city concept, ecological civilization ideas, and diverse urban concepts. Additionally, 42% of respondents have read the educational signage within the park.



Figure 24 & Figure 25: Volunteer Service Activities at Xinglong Lake Park
Source: <http://www.wenming.cn/>

According to survey data, 86% of respondents believe that the overall visual experience of the landscape is good. By comparison, 78% think the lake water landscape is effective, and 85% are satisfied with the plant landscape. The satisfaction rate for the variety of plant species is 79%, and 73% are satisfied with the seasonal changes in the landscape. Most respondents believe that Xinglong Lake Park offers scenic views in all seasons: cherry blossoms in spring,

pampas grass and water lilies in summer, cosmos flowers in autumn, and reeds in winter, which leave a lasting impression on visitors.

Research indicates that the existing vegetation can be roughly categorized into sparse woodland grassland areas, dense forest areas on the southern micro-mountain, lawn areas, plaza planting areas on the west and northwest sides, and aquatic plant areas. The Park predominantly features sparse woodland grasslands, with solitary, scattered, or clustered trees on lawns. A lack of shrubs and groundcover plants results in a relatively simple plant layering structure. Additionally, the ratio of evergreen to deciduous trees is about 4:1, and the ratio of green-leaved to colored-leaved trees is about 19:1, with fewer evergreen and colored-leaved trees in winter, leading to less seasonal variation.

On the other hand, visitor satisfaction with the water landscape is high during sunny weather. However, satisfaction drops significantly after heavy rain due to murky water, floating fish carcasses, and disordered aquatic plants. Some respondents also noted that the Park's landscape settings are somewhat monotonous, with limited natural ecological elements. The overall visibility is too open, lacks focal points, and the terrain and plant configurations are uniform. Additionally, the ongoing construction of surrounding buildings greatly affects the park's aesthetic appeal.

Transportation to and from the Park is relatively good, owing to the accessibility. According to survey data, 92% of respondents find visiting the park very convenient. Regarding road transportation, the current road network is nearly complete (as shown in Figure 5-18). Xinglong Lake Park is surrounded by urban expressways or main roads, with Science City North Road to the north, Science City Middle Road to the south, Tianfu Avenue South Section to the west, and Zizhou Avenue South Second Section to the east. Lakeside Road, a secondary urban

road, bounds Xinglong Lake and its surrounding lakeside scenic area. Driving from downtown Chengdu to the park takes about 40 minutes. Several secondary or local roads form a network between these major roads, creating a clear and complete road system.

Regarding public bus transportation, the Park's western side is serviced by Metro Line 1, with Xinglong Lake Station at the northwest corner and Science City Station at the southwest corner. Xinglong Station serves the northeast side of Metro Line 18. It takes about 60 minutes to reach the park by metro from the center of Chengdu. Additionally, there are two circular bus routes around Lakeside Road, with 13 bus stops. However, due to the area's early development stage, bus frequencies are low, and the stops lack clear signage.

The pedestrians are generally pleased. Survey data indicates that 72% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of the pedestrian system, and 83% are satisfied with the cycling system. The Park's pathways are arranged around the lake, with other roads connecting the entrances to the greenway. However, the layout is somewhat fragmented and disorganized, with unclear gradation and insufficient system integration. For those walking, an average adult takes about 2 hours and 40 minutes to circle the lake. In summer, the greenway has few trees for shade, and there are not enough rest benches, which makes travel tiresome. Cycling around the lake takes about 40 minutes, suitable for both exercise and sightseeing. However, the insufficient supply of shared bicycles and the lack of designated parking areas for bicycles negatively impact the visitors' experiences.

The northern side of Xinglong Lake Park connects Tianfu Science City Mountain Park, Luxi River Ecological Area, and Tianfu Park via greenways and roads. In contrast, the eastern side connects to Luxi Wisdom Valley, forming an interconnected green ecological system. This

setup allows residents to have green spaces outside their doors, establishing a network of forested areas, interlinked valleys, permeating parks, and connected greenways.

3.10 CONCLUDING ANALYSIS OF THE ACTIVITIES

The Xinglong Lake Park is a comparatively new creation, and the data about the activities is relatively limited, gathered in 2020. Repeated data gathering and more recent observations might confirm or refute some of the statements included in this chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE COMPARISON OF THE PARKS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This comparative study explores the unique characteristics and contributions of People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park. By examining their location and accessibility, historical significance, size and layout, facilities and activities, environmental and ecological features, social and cultural impact, and current management practices, this analysis aims to highlight how each park serves the community in distinct ways. Additionally, the study will discuss how each park, in its unique way, serves as a repository of city memory, preserving the cultural, historical, and ecological heritage of Chengdu while catering to the needs of its modern urban populaces.

4.2 LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

People's Park, situated in the heart of Chengdu's Qingyang District, enjoys a prime location near the city center. It lies approximately 700 meters west of Tianfu Square and 500 meters from the popular tourist destination Kuanzhai Alley. The park is well-connected by major roads and easily accessible by public transportation, including Metro Line 2 and several bus routes. However, its central location also means that it experiences significant traffic congestion during peak hours, which can be a challenge for visitors.

On the other hand, Xinglong Lake Park is located in the rapidly developing Tianfu New Area, part of the Chengdu Science City. Although it is farther from the city center, Xinglong Lake Park benefits from a comprehensive transportation network, including Metro Lines 1 and 18. The area is well-connected by major roads, and the ongoing development of infrastructure

continues to improve its accessibility, making it increasingly convenient for both residents and tourists.

4.3 HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

People's Park, established in 1911, holds substantial historical value and has witnessed numerous cultural and political events over the past century. The park is home to several significant heritage sites, including the Monument to the Railway Protection Movement Martyrs of the Xinhai Revolution, a national-level cultural heritage site, and several city-level heritage sites such as the Popular Education Hall and the Public Education Hall. These landmarks provide a tangible connection to Chengdu's rich history and cultural evolution.

In contrast, Xinglong Lake Park, opened to the public in 2016, lacks the deep historical roots of People's Park. However, it symbolizes modernity and the forward-looking development of the Tianfu New Area. Emphasizing innovative urban planning and ecological sustainability, Xinglong Lake Park represents the future-oriented aspirations of Chengdu, highlighting the city's commitment to contemporary design and environmental stewardship.

4.4 SIZE AND LAYOUT

People's Park covers an area of approximately 131,898 square meters and features a compact yet intricate design. The park includes diverse elements such as green spaces, water

areas, roads, squares, and building footprints. Its landscape is characterized by lush lawns, open views, and traditional Chinese gardens, creating a serene and picturesque environment.

Xinglong Lake Park, in contrast, spans about 420 hectares, making it significantly larger than People's Park. Its layout encompasses an expansive lake, multiple peninsulas, and a network of interconnected greenways and ecological zones. The design prioritizes open spaces and environmental conservation, offering visitors ample room to explore and enjoy the natural surroundings.

4.5 FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

People's Park is renowned for its traditional teahouses, particularly the Heming Teahouse, which serve as hubs for Chengdu's traditional leisure activities such as tea drinking, Mahjong, and card playing. The park also hosts various cultural events, music performances, and seasonal flower shows, providing a vibrant urban oasis for relaxation and social interaction.

Xinglong Lake Park offers a wide range of modern recreational activities, including walking, cycling, running, basketball, and various water sports. The park frequently hosts large-scale events such as marathons, photography exhibitions, and environmental activities. Its facilities cater to both active recreation and passive enjoyment, with educational signage about ecological practices enhancing its role as a learning environment.

4.6 ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

While primarily a recreational space, People's Park incorporates several ecological elements such as well-maintained gardens and artificial lakes. The park features traditional Chinese landscaping techniques, creating a tranquil environment that reflects the city's cultural heritage.

Xinglong Lake Park, on the other hand, embodies advanced ecological design principles, incorporating the "sponge city" concept and extensively using native vegetation to enhance biodiversity. The park serves as a crucial water reservoir, contributing to flood control and water purification, while also educating visitors on environmental conservation through its design and interpretive signage.

4.7 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT

People's Park acts as a vital social and cultural center for Chengdu's residents, fostering community interactions through its teahouses, cultural performances, and public spaces. It preserves Chengdu's heritage and serves as a place where traditional and modern lifestyles converge, enriching the city's cultural fabric.

Xinglong Lake Park aims to build a sense of community and promote healthy lifestyles through its extensive recreational facilities and frequent large-scale events. The park also serves as a venue for educational programs and international exchanges, aligning with the Tianfu New Area's vision of becoming a global city. This role enhances the park's social and cultural impact, making it a key player in the city's contemporary urban landscape.

4.8 CURRENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The management of People's Park focuses on maintaining its historical and cultural heritage while providing essential public services. The park's revenue primarily comes from the children's amusement park and teahouses, with ongoing efforts to balance commercial activities and public service functions to preserve its cultural integrity.

Conversely, Xinglong Lake Park is managed with a strong emphasis on sustainability and ecological preservation. The park's facilities and events are designed to support both environmental education and recreational activities, ensuring a high-quality living environment for the community. This approach not only enhances the park's ecological value but also its role as a center for community engagement and education.

4.9 CITY MEMORY

People's Park, with its rich historical background, offers a significant contribution to Chengdu's city memory. Established in 1911, the park preserves and showcases numerous historical structures and monuments, including the Monument to the Railway Protection Movement Martyrs of the Xinhai Revolution and the Popular Education Hall. These landmarks serve as tangible reminders of Chengdu's historical struggles and achievements, ensuring that the city's past remains a living part of its present and future. The park's dedication to preserving these historical elements fosters a deep sense of cultural continuity and identity among residents.

Cultural vibrancy is another hallmark of People's Park. Known for its traditional teahouses, such as the Heming Teahouse, the park offers a unique cultural experience that reflects the leisurely pace of life in Chengdu. These teahouses are more than places to enjoy tea; they are social institutions where locals gather to socialize, play Mahjong, and engage in leisurely activities. The park's frequent cultural performances, seasonal flower shows, and public events further embed it into the city's memory, making it a central venue for community gatherings and cultural celebrations.

Xinglong Lake Park, a modern addition to Chengdu's green spaces, has quickly become a symbol of the city's commitment to sustainable urban planning and ecological balance. The park, with its expansive lake, diverse vegetation, and innovative "sponge city" design, offers a serene escape from the city's hustle and bustle. Its natural beauty, which changes with the seasons, leaves a lasting impression on visitors, making it a cherished ecological oasis in the city. The park's design not only highlights the importance of water management and biodiversity but also serves as a model for future urban development, showcasing how cities can harmoniously integrate nature and modern infrastructure.

Beyond its ecological significance, Xinglong Lake Park is a vibrant center for social and cultural activities. It hosts numerous large-scale events, such as marathons, photography exhibitions, and environmental campaigns, which attract diverse groups of people and foster a sense of community. These events enhance the park's role as a hub for cultural exchange and social interaction, enriching the city's cultural fabric. Additionally, the park serves as an educational platform, using informational signage to raise public awareness about ecological sustainability and conservation. This educational aspect not only informs but also inspires visitors to engage in environmentally conscious practices.

Both parks contribute to the mental and physical well-being of Chengdu's residents. Xinglong Lake Park offers extensive recreational facilities, promoting a healthy and active lifestyle, while People's Park provides a tranquil environment for relaxation and stress relief. The natural beauty and serene settings of both parks allow residents to escape the pressures of urban life and find peace and rejuvenation.

The emotional and psychological significance of these parks cannot be overstated. For many residents, People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park are places filled with personal memories and experiences. These parks serve as venues for family gatherings, social interactions, and moments of solitude, creating lasting connections between the city's inhabitants and their environment. The emotional attachment to these parks enhances their value as cherished public spaces, integral to Chengdu's urban identity.

In conclusion, People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park each offer unique contributions to Chengdu's urban memory. While People's Park is steeped in historical and cultural significance, Xinglong Lake Park represents modernity and sustainable development. Together, these parks embody the city's rich heritage and forward-looking aspirations, creating lasting memories for generations to come.

CONCLUSION

The evolution of parks in Chengdu, as exemplified by People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park, mirrors the broader evolution of the city itself. People's Park has been an integral part of the city's landscape since 1911, providing a space that fulfills the childhood memories of the author, the author's parents, and grandparents. It is a repository of cultural and historical significance, where traditional activities and historical monuments preserve the essence of Chengdu's past.

As the city continues to grow, Xinglong Lake Park represents the next chapter in Chengdu's urban narrative. Though a newer addition, it is destined to become the People's Park for future generations. Decades from now, children will grow up with memories of Xinglong Lake Park, just as previous generations did with People's Park. This new park, with its modern amenities and sustainable design, will become a cherished part of the city's collective memory. Every generation has a "People's Park" they want to preserve, a space that encapsulates their experiences, joys, and the cultural ethos of their time. The act of preserving these parks is, in essence, an act of preserving the history and identity of the city. These green spaces are not merely recreational areas; they are living museums that reflect the city's growth, its values, and its continuity through time.

This study recognizes several limitations and omissions. The analysis primarily relied on existing literature, site visits, and archival research, which may not capture the full range of visitor experiences and perceptions. Additionally, the study focused on two specific parks in Chengdu, potentially overlooking other urban parks that might offer valuable insights into the city's urban planning and cultural preservation efforts. The findings also raise several questions and suggest areas for future investigation. How do other urban parks in Chengdu and similar

rapidly developing cities balance historical preservation with modern urban planning? What are the long-term impacts of these parks on residents' quality of life and the city's ecological sustainability? Further research could involve comparative studies of urban parks in different cultural and geographical contexts, as well as longitudinal studies to assess the evolving roles and impacts of these parks over time.

In conclusion, the evolution of parks like People's Park and Xinglong Lake Park is intrinsically tied to the evolution of Chengdu. As each generation treasures and preserves its own version of a beloved park, they contribute to the ongoing narrative of the city. By valuing and maintaining these green spaces, Chengdu honors its past, enriches its present, and ensures a vibrant and sustainable future for its residents.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY INFORMATION REGARDING THE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE
SURVEY OF XINGLONG LAKE PARK

The questionnaire was created by students from the School of Environment at Sichuan University. A total of 196 surveys were conducted over four sessions between June and July 2020. After excluding 7 invalid questionnaires, 189 valid responses were collected, resulting in an effective questionnaire rate of 96.43%.

Specifically, the first field survey conducted on June 16, 2020 (Tuesday) resulted in 29 interviews, with 28 valid responses. The second field survey on June 20, 2020 (Saturday) resulted in 63 interviews, with 62 valid responses. The third field survey on July 5, 2020 (Sunday) resulted in 59 interviews, with 57 valid responses. The fourth field survey on July 6, 2020 (Monday) resulted in 45 interviews, with 42 valid responses

Basic Information from the Questionnaire

Variable	Category	Counts	Percentage
Gender	Male	73	38.62%
	Female	116	61.38%
Age	18 years and below	8	4.23%
	19-44 years	91	48.15%
	45-59 years	68	35.98%
	60 years and above	22	11.64%
Accompaniment Type	Alone	32	16.93%
	Family	70	37.04%
	Partner	22	11.64%
	Friends/Relatives	65	34.39%
Visitor Type	Nearby office workers	25	13.23%
	Nearby residents	41	21.69%
	Residents from other city areas	106	56.08%
	Tourists from outside the city	17	8.99%
Visit Frequency	First time	26	13.76%
	Daily	14	7.41%
	Weekly	67	35.45%
	Monthly	37	19.58%
	Every six months or longer	45	23.81%
Transportation Mode	Bus/Metro	75	39.68%
	Driving	67	35.45%
	Walking	19	10.05%

	Cycling	21	11.11%
	Taxi	7	3.70%
Travel Time	10 minutes or less	32	16.93%
	10-30 minutes	50	26.46%
	30-60 minutes	75	39.68%
	1-2 hours	23	12.17%
	More than 2 hours	9	4.76%
Stay Duration	0-2 hours	65	34.39%
	2-4 hours	98	51.85%
	4-6 hours	21	11.11%
	More than 6 hours	5	2.65%

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