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The Impact of Landscape Design on House Prices and Values in Residential Development in Urban Areas

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Abstract

Focusing on a world class living environment, a good quality residential area can be highlighted as an important issue in creating a sustainable living environment. However, limited green spaces within the proximity of residential properties are not supporting the landscape space and are not conducive to living space. The aim of the paper is to investigate the impact of landscape design on house prices and values in residential development particularly in urban areas. The paper employed quantitative approaches which include i) a questionnaire survey; and ii) an observation. This empirical study is based on the findings of case studies conducted in several residential areas in Klang Valley. The findings show that the residents have very clear ideas on how much green space is really important in residential areas in order to create a sustainable residential environment. Despite the absence of public actions in terms of providing information, encouraging participations in the survey and promoting awareness of those interviewed have shown considerable interest in promoting landscape design to be applied in residential development. The perceptions of the quality and quantity of landscape designs in residential areas especially in Klang Valley can be further researched for future study.

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1. Introduction

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Landscape, which includes topography, vegetation and associated plants and soil, water bodies, and their spatial configuration, is one of the most visual needs of people [1]. They add that human-nature interactions lead human beings to have contrasting preference on the surrounding landscape and environment because a pleasing landscape can bring mental and physical benefits to people. The understanding and preference by people on their surrounding landscape provide a challenge for policy-making and implementation in residential property. Landscape design is an importance element to housing development since it can create genius loci (sense of place) to the housing area. This will determine the level of comfort for the residents and the residential areas. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people.

2. Landscape Design as an Added Value for Residential Development

There are many factors of landscape design that can influence house value and price [2]. Luttik [3] states that the largest increase in house prices due to environmental factors and analysis revealed the house price varies by type of landscape that have in house. According to Kadish and Nutesil [4] the property high structure vegetation has positive and significant coefficient to the sale price of the property of the house. Besides that, house price and value are influenced by factor of natural sources that have in house such as open spaces and water bodies. According to Wolf [5] yard, street trees, forest, open spaces and parks in development growth area can add a value to the property. Niemiera [6] studies that a different type of plant sizes; types and level of sophistication of landscape can add value to house property. In that study, design sophistication was the factor that most added to a house's value. Ng [7] adds that park and open space is one of the most important of selling a point and it becomes a tool for the developer to attract prospect buyers.

Although there have been a few exceptions, houses with softscape elements are generally preferred compared to houses without softscape elements. According to Henry [8] plants includes trees, grass and others Softscape features may affect the price of the house. It's also supported by Niemiera [6] and Des Rosiers et al., [9] states that a sophisticated landscape design includes varying sizes, types and color of plants can become factors that most added to a house value and price. Niemera [6] adds that landscape design sophistication can increase 42% value of the house rather than the size of the plant (36%) and diversity type of plant material (22%). Thus, large softscape and hardscape expenditure on the residential development can increase house value and will result in a higher selling price.

3. Methodology

This study employed quantitative approaches which include a questionnaire survey and observation. In total, 1000 respondents were used as representatives for the whole population in Klang Valley. After obtaining the target response rate, the collected data were further analyses using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 20.0 software. The types of data used were nominal, ordinal and categorical. These types of data and the objectives of the study determined the type of statistical analysis employed.

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1. Criteria of Landscape Design for Residential Areas

In order to identify the needs of the users in terms of landscape design, respondents were asked the type of criteria considered to be significant for the landscape design in their residential areas. The tables present the frequency distribution of respondents' answers.

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