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STUDY OF PUBLIC SPACES AND RECREATION AREAS IN THE CITY OF URUAÇU (BRAZIL)

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ABSTRACT

The demand for public leisure spaces has grown considerably in recent years, since daily routine at work and in transit make people look for places to rest. However, in the vast majority of cases, these spaces do not offer appropriate conditions of use, such as irregular sidewalks and debris, a problem directly related to the comfort and accessibility of passers-by; Another obstacle is caused by bad lighting in the roads, affecting the safety of the population. This is due to the lack of maintenance on the part of the residents and the public power. Based on the data collected through the Portal Method (Grajewski and Vaughan, 2001 apud Barros, 2013) in a specific region of the city of Uruaçu-Goiás, this article analyzes the flow of pedestrians and vehicles, a survey was made on the use and occupation of the land, and the number of entrance gates to the lots, in order to correlate the data to the subject in question. Thus it was found that vehicle traffic is substantially larger than that of pedestrians, and the public places do not offer accessibility conditions for all. As a consequence, people end up looking for entertainment in the urban centers that they could find near their home. In the study area there are no leisure facilities that provide safety and comfort. Making it necessary to have a space for people to expand their social contact and the environment.

KEYWORDS

Accessibility, Public Spaces, Recreation, Flow

1. INTRODUCTION

Some theories predict that after the Industrial Revolution, contemporary Western civilization starts to get into the culture of leisure, where the man goes to devote greater and better part of his energies to activities that enriches and stimulates pleasure (Santini, 2003). For Dumazedier (2000, p. 34), leisure consists of “a set of occupations to which the individual can surrender freely, whether to rest, to have fun, to recreate himself (...) or get rid of professional, family and social obligations”.

The research in question, examines the relationship of spatial configuration, referring to accessibility and the leisure area of the city of Uruaçu-Goiás, specifically in the northwest area of downtown. Thus, an analysis based on the data collected via the Portal Method (Grajewski and Vaughan, 2001 apud Barros, 2013), investigating the flow of pedestrians and vehicles, in the region of study.

Thinking that several citizens work far from home, and do not want to go to their residence during free time (such as lunch), these spaces may come in handy for a brief rest, without any concern for safety. According to Amendment No. 26 of the São Paulo state government, in order for a new neighborhood to be approved, it should allocate a portion of the area to the public leisure spaces.

Considering the above, the research in question presents an analysis of the flow of automobiles and pedestrians in a certain region of the city of Uruaçu, being verified the importance and necessity of leisure, considering that these spaces may come in handy for a brief rest, without that there is concern about safety and with that bringing a visual comfort to the population.

2. DATASETS AND METHODS

The methodology adopted to analyze the problems related to accessibility in the municipality of Uruaçu, more specifically in the northwest zone of the Centro district (Figure 1), can be divided into two stages: bibliographic review and information collection. In order to define the relevant issues, this collection was directed to them, consisting of: counting of pedestrians and vehicles by the Portal Method (Grajewski and Vaughan, 2001 apud Barros, 2013), count of the number of gates, indication of the use and occupation of the ground and identify accessibility issues pertaining to the region.

The pedestrians and vehicles count was performed 8 times in 4 different days of the week set to indicate a heterogeneous flow behavior during the middle (Monday to Friday) and the weekend (Saturday and Sunday). On each day, the count was done during the morning peak in the range from 7 o'clock am to 9 o'clock am and afternoon peak in the range of 5 o'clock p.m to 7 o'clock p.m.

3. RESULTS

Analyzing the region of study, there is the absence of public spaces. The few found in this scope, are in precarious conditions, thus not allowing the permanence of the population in these places.

When one observes the map referring to the use and occupation of the soil (Figure 1), there is a predominantly residential area. Table 1 shows a survey of the flow between cars and pedestrians, noting that vehicle traffic is more intense in this region.



Figure 1 - Land use map of the centre of Uruaçu.

Streets	Saturday and Sunday (12/12/2015 and 12/12/2015)		Monday and Tuesday (12/14/2015 and 12/15/2015)	
	Vehicles	Pedestrian	Vehicles	Pedestrian
Pedro Ludovico	26	3	62	5
Leopoldo de Bulhões	16	11	27	6
Porto Nacional	7	3	4	7
Isabel Fernandes	3	3	5	3
Dona Candida	6	2	5	1
Travessa Machombombo	2	4	9	0
Manuel Ribeiro Sobrinho	8	0	11	1
Travessa Brasília	2	2	4	1
Oldrado Silva Rocha	30	5	26	5
Quintino Bucaiuva	15	1	21	7
Iracema do Norte	7	4	14	2
Benedito Almeida Campos	12	1	27	2
Pio I	4	2	4	6
Rio Verde	22	10	38	3
Alvino Mendes da Silva	1	0	3	1

Table 1 - Flow number of vehicles and people.

In order to promote socialization among individuals and to provide the surrounding population of the research region with safe and easily accessible recreation sites, an alternative would be to create public spaces and improve those which already exist. Also developing the commerce of the region and thereby increasing the movement of pedestrians.

According to Cabezas (2013), the comfort of a public space is acquired when it reaches its maximum utilization, coinciding simultaneously with a set of ideal conditions, determined by factors such as: thermal conditioners, urban scale, occupation of public space, perception of safety, acoustic conditions, air quality, ergonomics, etc.

Since the creation of a new public space, such as a park or a square, demands time and money, it is proposed to revitalize existing ones, in order to guarantee all the conditions for their maximum use, taking into consideration as ideal conditions of a leisure space.

Another point that must be analyzed more rigorously is accessibility, not only in public spaces, but also in the region as a whole. Accessibility does not refer only to people with physical needs, but the population in general. When considering the sidewalks as elements of transition between the private (residence, commerce) and the public (street), one can perceive a great amount of factors that make them unusable as spaces of leisure.

After observing the mobility of the municipality of Uruaçu, the great majority of the sidewalks do not correspond to the required by law, which is because the city was not planned. Therefore, the access to the sidewalks, when they exist, makes the pedestrians find it quite difficult, having to choose the traffic in the streets, next to the vehicles.

The owner of a property is responsible for building the sidewalk or promenade in front of his lot and should keep it in perfect state of conservation. Decree No. 5.296 / 04, regulates Laws No. 10488/00 and No. 10.098 / 00, which establish general norms and basic criteria for the promotion of the accessibility of persons with disabilities or with reduced mobility.

In this way, the use of sidewalks as living areas at strategic points, besides providing pleasurable moments and more health for citizens, could encourage the residents to a conscious measure to organize them according to the needs of the pedestrian.

After data collection took place from December 12th to 15th, 2015, it was possible to establish relationships that represent the number of people moving around in the course analyzed. The following are the values found:

The displacements by vehicle were more distributed between Pedro Ludovico Avenue, Leopoldo de Bulhões Street and Rio Verde Avenue. Among the pedestrians, Leopoldo de Bulhões Street presented a more salient value than the others.

The movement of pedestrians was homogeneous throughout the studied region as a whole, and Quintino Bocaiuva Street presented the highest percentage of pedestrians within an hour. On the other hand, the vehicles were in greater quantity in the Avenue Pedro Ludovico, followed by the Rio Verde Avenue, and the Benedito Almeida Campos Street.

At weekends there was an average displacement of 483 vehicles and 129 pedestrians per hour, while the weekly days were 924 vehicles and 144 pedestrians. What makes it more evident that the number of pedestrians has not undergone major changes in quantity on weekdays, only vehicles that practically double on weekdays.

Figure 2 shows the data obtained by counting gates available for the analyzed region totaling 631. Of this value, 10.7% is located on Oldrado Silva Rocha Street, previously observed as the second street with the largest flow of vehicles. Pedro Ludovico Avenue has a greater flow of vehicles, but only 6.8% of the gates observed. Among the pedestrians, there was no correlation between gates and displacements, since for each observed day, greater movements were registered in different places.

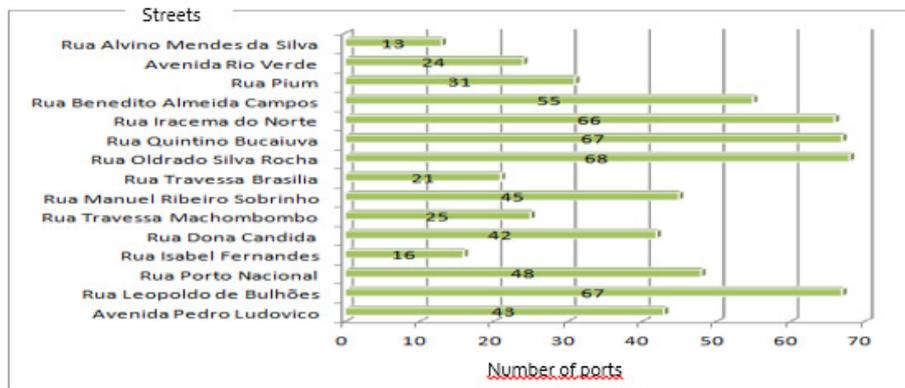


Figure 2 - Number of gates of the areas related to the study area

4. CONCLUSIONS

The article in question clearly outlines ways to solve the problems in the urban environment of the municipality of Uruaçu, more specifically in the central region. Based on the data obtained, a parallel can be made between the study variables and the living areas. Looking further, one notices that this is not a specific problem that is present only in the city of Uruaçu, but it is also a problem in most large urban centres.

The analysis of the centre of Uruaçu indicated several problems such as holes in the streets, garbage and debris on the sidewalks. Another major problem is the lack of security and trust of the people in the environment that they live and the streets that circulate every day, a dangerous need, and for many, a daily challenge.

The flow of pedestrians is more constant on the streets that have sidewalks with transition elements, and developing this mechanism is an attractive way to make public spaces, areas with greater vitality. In addition to making the routes safer for all people.

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