

BUFTEA, Romania

Location: Bucharest, Romania
Type: Transit Oriented Development
Year Design: 2007
Status: In Progress/Planned
Size: 156 Hectares
Planning: as DPZ-Europe

Buftea's master plan envisions the creation of three neighborhoods;

Neighborhood 1 to the west of the forest,
 Neighborhood 2 to the east, and
 Neighborhood 3 to the north.

Each neighborhood has its own small village square/center, as well as neighborhood parks and playgrounds. The new train station is located at the southeast corner of Neighborhood 1, at the junction with a new proposed access road. The station is relatively central to the development as a whole, allowing residents from all three neighborhoods easy access by foot or bicycle. The street system is conceived primarily for the pedestrian; a rigid grid is avoided. Instead, the streets meander in the direction of the pedestrian flow between the station and the residential areas. Resulting is a high street which connects the station in the south with all the main squares in Neighborhoods 1 and 3. Two streets to the north and south edge of the forest, as well pedestrian paths leading through the woods connect Neighborhood 2 with the rest of the town.

Community sports fields are located in the 100 meter no-building zone along the railway. A school and its playing fields are located to the north to avoid the problem of railway noise. The existing drainage canals are kept and integrated into the landscape concept, and act as a feature for those houses fronting them.

The canals are linked to the new rainwater retention pond located between Neighborhoods 1 and 3. Along the northwest, north, and northeast property edges, thick rows of non-deciduous trees are to be planted to act as a buffer to the cold winter winds.

A variety of unit types are planned, ranging from apartment buildings towards the center, to row houses, semi-detached houses and single-family houses towards the edges. The building heights range from 4 storeys plus roof along the high street and main squares down to 2 storeys elsewhere. Small businesses such as a bakery, small supermarket, a café, etc. are located at the commercial square along with the kindergarten, development sales office and post office. A church and a multi-functional building are located in Neighborhood 1, and further kindergartens are located at the main squares of Neighborhoods 2 and 3.

Through the use of traditional city planning aspects of walk-ability and mixed-use, the use of the automobile is considerably reduced. Added to this the public transport link in the form of the train station, carbon emissions will be significantly lower than those found at other comparable developments. The integration of the existing landscape features (canals) into the plan acts to reduce the build-up of heat during the hot summers, and new planting will block cold winter winds. Combined, these aspects will significantly lower energy needs for cooling and heating respectively.

