

Urban Innovations

Dubai will be redefining itself with new public works to cement its place as global destination, says Kerem Cengiz, director of LWK+PARTNERS MENA

As 2019 draws to a close and a new decade begins, Dubai positions itself at the centre of the world's stage as the host of the upcoming 2020 Expo. The expo, acting as a microcosm of the global community, provides a platform for addressing some of the most significant challenges currently facing the international community.

With a focus on collaboration, innovation and sustainability the Expo presents a salient parallel to Dubai as the city redefines itself in response to the economic challenges faced during the closing decade.

With its characteristic optimism, Dubai is in the throes of realigning its economic reliance away from fossil fuels and towards a strong focus on hospitality and tourism and the 2020 Expo acting as a catalyst, Dubai is defining itself not only as a regional gateway, but as global destination in and of itself.

While this has seen a surge in development in the private hospitality sector, the Dubai government has also undertaken a significant suite of public works to enhance the urban landscape and make the city more hospitable to visitors and tourists.

In April of this year, the RTA announced a series of public works projects aimed at transforming existing overlooked public spaces into hubs of activity. One such scheme is Sunset

Promenade, a new beachfront destination featuring a unique range of activities that will cover an area of 80,000 sq m connected to Jumeirah Beach Walk and is specially designed to cater for family entertainment.

Designed by LWK + Partners, the development responds to site constraints and a narrow beach depth by creating a string of floating activity platforms across the beach front, which are to be partially reclaimed and floating pontoons/platforms.

Organically shaped, the platforms will provide additional seafront facilities and host a wide range of activities, increasing the total beach area to 107,000 sq m. The floating portion has been sensitively designed to not disturb the seabed and the surrounding marine life, using this unique opportunity to pursue ecologically sensitive development.

The Promenade is envisioned as a series of hills and dunes covered in grass and sand, a set of seemingly natural formations containing urban programme. Leisure, activity and dining spaces are situated within the hills and open onto sheltered activity spaces.

Above, beach users can take an elevated position from which to enjoy the beach. Between the hills, open zones are uniquely programmed to encourage all day and evening entertainment activities, in a more sustainable way.

