Green Infrastructure and Urban Regeneration in Jardim do Éden

Submitted By: São Paulo City Hall



Organization Profile

Organization Name: Executive Secretariat of the Watersheds Program – São Paulo City Hall

Organization Type: Subnational government

Website: https://prefeitura.sp.gov.br/web/secretaria_executiva_do_programa_mananciais

Practice Details

Country(ies): Brazil

City(ies): São Paulo

Start Year: 2025

Ongoing: Yes

End Year: N/A

Main Adequate Housing Components:



Housing Thematic Areas:

- Housing & Climate Mitigation
- Housing & Climate Adaptation
- Housing, Land & Spatial Planning

Relevant SDGs:



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Problem & Context

Located in the southern zone of São Paulo, within a water source protection area, Jardim do Éden faced precarious settlement conditions, lacking sanitation, proper drainage, paving, or quality green spaces. The local stream received waste and sewage due to the absence of infrastructure, compromising residents' health, environmental safety, and quality of life. Irregular urban growth and the lack of integrated public policies hindered access to adequate housing. Legislation such as State Law No. 12,233/2006, which established the APRM-Guarapiranga (Protection and Recovery Area for the Guarapiranga Watershed), along with municipal environmental regulations, enabled intervention. The need for nature-based solutions aimed to regenerate the stream, create inclusive and resilient public spaces for community interaction, and ultimately improve the local quality of life.

Solution Developed

The Jardim do Éden housing initiative aims to transform an underserved area into a healthy, safe, and sustainable urban space. Led by the Executive Secretariat of the Mananciais Program, the project integrates social assistance, planning, and construction to reduce environmental damage and ensure residents' permanence. It includes sanitation, drainage, paving, and an innovative green-blue infrastructure approach. Rain gardens manage water at higher elevations, while a Linear Park at the lowest point will feature bioengineering techniques, constructed wetlands, and the renaturalization of the Sapato Branco Stream. The park will also include a sports court, play areas, and community spaces. The project directly benefits local families and pioneers urban-scale nature-based solutions, combining environmental balance, social inclusion, and improved quality of life.

Implementation

The Jardim do Éden housing project is being implemented through an integrated approach that combines urbanization, sanitation, and green-blue infrastructure. Works already completed include sewage and drainage networks, paving, slope containment, and rain gardens. The central phase involves creating a Linear Park with a constructed wetland, bioswales, terraces, a lagoon, and the renaturalization of the Sapato Branco Stream, along with community spaces like a sports court and playground. Coordinated by the Executive Secretariat of the Mananciais Program (SEPM), under São Paulo's Housing Department (SEHAB), the project also involves the Environment Secretariat (SVMA), contractor Transvias, and design firm Geasa, with strong community participation. Planning was completed in August 2023, and urban works began in August 2024. The Linear Park will be built in late 2025. Funded by municipal resources from the Mananciais Program, the project directly benefits 214 families, combining interdepartmental action, public participation, and sustainable solutions to ensure social, environmental, and urban impact.

Enablers & Obstacles

The implementation was supported by State Law No. 12,233/2006, which established the APRM-Guarapiranga and enabled urban interventions in consolidated settlements, balancing environmental protection and housing rights. Backed by the Housing Department and the Mananciais Program, the project had strong political and institutional support.

Community engagement strengthened mobilization and legitimacy, while the adoption of nature-based solutions was made possible through collaboration between designers, the construction company, and public authorities. A key challenge was aligning urban work schedules with participatory processes, addressed through ongoing dialogue and technical adjustments.

Results & Impact

The works started in August 2023 have already resulted in concrete improvements in Jardim do Éden, directly benefiting 214 families. A total of 1,587 meters of sewage networks, 570 meters of drainage, 4,122 m² of paving, a water supply network, slope containment, and the upgrading of alleys and sidewalks have been implemented. These investments have brought greater safety, sanitation, and mobility to the area.

The next phase, involving the implementation of the Linear Park, will expand the impacts by integrating green-blue infrastructure into the community's daily life. The renaturalization of the stream and the creation of a constructed wetland, bioswales, and high-quality green areas will bring environmental and public health benefits, reduce flood risks, and promote environmental quality.

For low-income families, the gains translate into dignity, well-being, access to leisure and social spaces, and the strengthening of community bonds. In the long term, the intervention will contribute to the valorization of the territory, increased urban resilience, and the strengthening of a collective environmental awareness.

Replication & Scale Up

The practice can be replicated in water source areas with precarious settlements and degraded streams. The factors enabling replication include the adoption of an integrated action plan, the application of nature-based solutions, and interdepartmental collaboration, ensuring institutional coordination, community participation, and environmental sustainability.

The practice can be expanded through the application of nature-based solutions in other water source areas. The model already guides interventions by the Mananciais Program, with the implementation of green infrastructure and linear parks aimed at restoring streams and water bodies.

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Policy Uptake

This housing practice has been fully adopted into formal policy frameworks and legislation, and is being implemented at scale with institutional support.

Jardim do Éden is one of the focus areas of the Mananciais Program, which urbanizes precarious settlements in environmentally protected areas, improving water quality and, when possible, promoting land tenure regularization. The actions follow specific environmental legislation and have institutional support from the São Paulo City Hall, integrating urbanization, public facilities, parks, and housing complexes.

Lessons & Takeaways

Although the project has not yet been completed, some lessons can be considered: anticipating solutions for the improper use of public spaces, providing traffic safety measures, and ensuring continuous maintenance. Inspection and technical stewardship, combined with community engagement from the outset, can guarantee ongoing care, promoting the preservation and responsible use of facilities and green areas.