Public parks are important to urban environments. Among other functions, they provide environmental services, such as air and water purification, and they increase both recreational opportunities and the attractiveness of the urban environment. This article focuses on urban public parks in Accra-Tema city-region, Ghana, and explores three key issues: availability of urban parks, the relative importance of parks within urban planning and policies in Accra, and strategies to improve cultural and individual attitudes about urban public parks. One goal of this study is to provoke discussions about ways to help people understand the importance of urban parks and green spaces to the urban environment in Ghana and elsewhere in the developing world. The study revealed that Accra-Tema city-region has few public parks and that urban parks lack planning strategic support and funding. A number of related and unrelated factors have worked adversely against the provision of public parks and open spaces and have affected the conditions of current park facilities in the city. These factors include development pressures, politicians’ manoeuvring, a complex land ownership system, and ad hoc planning. The paper concludes by offering some policy prescriptions.

**Keywords:** Public parks, open spaces, recreational planning, public parks benefits, institutional culture, policy, Accra-Tema city-region.