Landscape layout guidelines:

Key amenities - What is most used and hence, should be given prominence in design wrt sizing and location:

1. Walking track
2. Outdoor Kids play village / area (+ Tree House)
3. Swimming Pool (ideally with shading/cover) (sizing as per guidelines, should not have too many pools since they are space intensive and expensive to maintain and operate, ideal – large sized pool for all, kids pool and where relevant, indoor ladies pool)
4. Café / Library
5. WFH spaces
6. Sports Courts / Turfs / Lawns with sizing as per guidelines – badminton (enclosed), cricket, football (full size or 5-a-side), basketball. Sports with lesser no. of players eg. Squash, Tennis should be provided only in Premium or Luxury developments or City level amenities in large townships, since they take up a lot of space.
7. Pets zone – but clearly segregated from rest of the landscape (also access from building lobby to the pets zone should not lead to pets walking through the key amenities)
8. Temple
9. Note: Odd shaped lawns which do not work for 6. are not used significantly – such spaces should instead be used for 'forest' / 'garden' / 'farm' leading to some additional benefits in addition to 'green space'; similarly spaces for communal cooking eg. bar-be-que are not used significantly.

Making layout appear green:

a. Preferably, all walking paths should be shaded from both sides – can be trees on both sides or tree on one side and building edge on the other. If building edge, use shrubs to soften the edge. The tree size to be proportionate to the width of the footpath – generally small or medium trees can be used. Width of walking path should be between 3 m – 4.5 m (ideally min. 3.6 m).
b. Parking areas need to have a tree canopy. To enable this, need a 0.6-1 m patch after every 3 car parks (~7 m-7.5 m) which should be planted with medium/tall trees.
c. For all buildings > 15 m in height, it is important to break the visual perspective of their height/mass as perceived from the ground. This can be achieved by a tree line at a distance of 3-6 m from the building line. This can preferably be part of a. or b. above or if not, additional tree line.
d. Wherever trees are planted, ensure sufficient soil depth so that they don't cause uplift/damage to the footpath / parking etc. adjacent to it.
e. Corners of buildings and footpaths (which do not obstruct walking path or roads) should be developed as pocket gardens (see image 1 (appropriate pocket garden) and 2 (missed opportunity)).
f. Buffer zone of 2-3 m from property edge should be mandated for extensive plantation. This should include tall trees which create shade canopies. Fire tender movement should be planned beyond this. This can (should) be complimented by having trees on the other side of the sidewalk from the property boundary.

Ventilation:

a. Even if there are ground floor apartments ensure visual connectivity and air flow between open space pockets by having some unit (or part thereof) - min width of 4.5 m as open.

Pigeons

a. Pigeons are a significant problem in Indian cities. Due care should be taken in landscape (eg. trellis design) and façade (eg. balcony railing or width of fins) to avoid giving pigeons space to rest / land or nest.

Open recreational spaces - Hierarchy & other observations:

a. Cluster
    a. Focused on < 10 years olds and elders. Appropriate play equipment and sitting spaces (with good shading).
b. Neighborhood
    a. Having something for different age groups
        i. General purpose playground / lawn of adequate size to have a game of 10+ people (eg. 5-a-side football, 5-a-side cricket etc.)
        ii. Larger playground with play equipment for 5-12 year olds (eg. playground t St. James's Park, London)
        iii. Sitting / hangout spaces
    b. Clubhouse
    c. Event (party) plaza, to generally be hardscape (plaza) and not lawn.
    d. Temple
c. City
    a. Large running areas.
    b. Large play areas (lawns which can be used for various sports and 'horsing around' with some but not a lot of trees)
    c. Large kids playgrounds with advanced / rare equipment (eg. playground at Holland Park, London; playground at Union Square Garden, New York)
    d. Formal sports/athletics arenas
    e. Large functions spaces (for 200+ people, which cannot be accommodated in the neighbourhood level event (party) space, to generally be hardscape plaza, and not lawn.
d. Sizing
    a. Rectangular or oval/round shapes are preferable.
    b. If rectangular/square/similar, ensure that one dimension is no more than 4x the other. This can be measured at the 90% percentile of both dimensions if the dimensions are varying. Avoid large protrusions which dramatically reduce one of the dimensions. If this is necessary, ensure that the protrusions are used to demarcate start/end of the spaces and the broken up spaces are designed as differing (not contiguous spaces).

Definitions

Small Tree – min. branch/growth 4.5 m. above ground and min. canopy diameter of 3 m.
Medium Tree – min. canopy height of 6 m. above ground and min. canopy diameter of 6 m.
Tall tree - min. canopy height of 9 m. above ground and min. canopy diameter of 6 m.

Image



1. Appropriate Pocket garden
2. Missed opportunity

