Beat: Business

Transforming a City“¦ and the Lives of Millions

Saudi Arabia is investing in four major

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 25.09.2019, 16:51 Time

USPA NEWS - The city of Riyadh has embarked on an ambitious programme of urban planning and civil engineering announced by the government worth over US$23 billion that will transform the capital with four major projects into one of the most livable cities in the world.

King Salman Park will be the largest city park in the world, covering an area of 13.4km², four times the area of Central Park in New York. Sports Boulevard will be a state-of-the-art new health and wellness destination in the heart of the city, providing a network of cycle routes and adding an impressive 135km of professional cycling track. Green Riyadh is a citywide greening initiative which includes the planting of 7.5 million trees. The project will help lower the temperature of the city by 2°C and provide welcome shade, allowing residents to walk and exercise outside. Finally, Riyadh Art will establish the city as “˜a gallery without walls´ through a world-class interactive public arts programme. The project will curate 1,000 pieces of art through world-class art programmes and host an annual art festival.

These four transformative projects, managed by the Royal Commission for Riyadh City (RCRC) (formally known as Riyadh Development Authority), complement the Saudi Vision 2030 “˜Quality of Life´ Program and are aligned with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, to create sustainable cities and communities, while driving urgent action against climate change.

In addition, these projects will deliver huge social, economic and environmental benefits to the city. Many jobs will be created: construction of King Salman Park alone will generate around 50,000 jobs to completion, and then thousands more service jobs ongoing. Tourism will flourish in a city that will become a destination of choice, not only for business but also for leisure. And families will thrive with improved mobility, a better environment, and greater opportunities to experience art and culture.

A spokesman for the RCRC said: “Life is changing for the residents of Riyadh. In line with government reforms in education, healthcare and tourism, we are pushing forward with the diversification and development plans for the city. The goals of Vision 2030 are coming to fruition and massive infrastructure projects such as these will have significant positive implications for our social tapestry and cultural wellbeing.“

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-15940/transforming-a-city-and-the-lives-of-millions.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Zayad Alshaikhli

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