

# BRUGES KING ALBERT I PARK RENOVATION KICKS-OFF WITH UNDERGROUND PARKING EXTENSION

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West 8 continues to be involved in the landscape and urban design developments of 't Zand—a public square in the UNESCO city of Bruges. In collaboration with **BOVA Architects**, West 8 has created a new plan that extends the existing parking structure below 't Zand Square into the area below King Albert I Park and redesigns the park itself. In 2018, West 8 successfully developed a renewed identity for 't Zand Square—creating an only-in-Bruges experience that draws on the rich historical, cultural and scenic layers of the city.

## Underground Parking Expansion

The large expansion of 't Zand Square underground parking facility will contain 650 new spaces by 2022. The unique layout of the underground parking expansion is entirely tailored to protect the monumental trees in the historic 19<sup>th</sup> century park above. A 32.4 meters (106 feet) by 163 meters (535 feet) extension is created by carefully working around the massive existing tree roots.

A pedestrian entrance to the parking structure is seamlessly integrated into the rolling typography of the park, creating a park that flows above and within the entrance infrastructure. Special machines purify the dusty, stagnant air in the underground parking garage, creating the largest and cleanest parking lot in Belgium.

## King Albert I Park

King Albert I Park is redesigned to create a unique landscape continuum between the Bruges train station and city center. The redesign integrates the park with 't Zand Square and the iconic Concert Hall to create a vast, cohesive public space.

A design palette established in 't Zand Square—from furniture to materials— continues through the parking structure, park and concert hall to create a uniform development. A subtle material and color palette favors materials such as quality natural stone.

The responsive design of the park will ultimately lead to a synthesis that reinforces the urban function and spatial quality of the space as a whole, strengthening the relationship of the park with the surrounding neighborhoods. The renovation project will create a sense of belonging—generating new urban connections and social relationships.

The council approved the project development plans in late 2018. Construction of the underground structures is estimated to begin in early 2020, while the entire park renovation is expected to carry on until 2022. Consultants of the project include engineering offices Boydens

Engineering (technical equipment), Jan Hoste (stability), Studiebureau Verhaeghe & partners (weighing), Dirk Berteyn (tree expert), Arcadis (environment and mobility), VEKMO (safety coordination) and Bureau Bouwtechniek (architectural consultant).

For more information please also see [official announcement](#) of the city of Bruges