

An aerial photograph of a city street scene, featuring a large white 'SITES' text overlay. The scene includes a multi-lane road with a white truck, a large parking lot, and several buildings, including a prominent glass skyscraper on the left. In the background, there are several circular green spaces or parks. The entire image has a blue tint.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

With a recent adjustment to our SITES publishing agenda, Michigan Chapter ASLA award winning projects will now be showcased immediately following the announcement of the winners. This Winter SITES 2010 issue is devoted to the 2010 Chapter Awards announced at our recent Annual Meeting and Awards Gala held this past October. Congratulations to these winners! These projects represent a unique blending of science, art and technology, and epitomize the tremendous talent pool of landscape architects here in Michigan. I am sure reading about these outstanding projects will inspire ideas for 2011 submissions.

The changes we have made to SITES is among many achievements this year for Michigan ASLA, including successfully publishing four issues of SITES without assistance from an outside agency. Extra effort by several Executive Committee members and volunteers to make this happen has concluded in a consistently high-quality, fiscally responsible publication. This, combined with continued support from product vendors and firm owners to sponsor the publication, has made this year's SITES journal a huge success.

Our Annual Meeting was another winning achievement. Feedback regarding the location, speakers, educational session topics, and dinner programs indicated a high

level of satisfaction from attendees and exhibitors alike. Thank you again to our vendors and their generous sponsorships, and to SuLin Kotowicz and her committee for planning this spectacular event.

As we go into 2011, we are financially equipped and have an experienced and dedicated Executive Committee to carry out the business of MiASLA. One important item on next year's agenda will involve working with the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth in firming up guidelines for our continuing education requirements. Watch for details on this in our e-newsletter, along with ways to engage with MiASLA as a volunteer. Our incoming Chapter President is organizing various committees aimed at boosting our membership, enhancing our website, archiving MiASLA heritage, detailing our continuing education program and more. Let's welcome our new President by supporting her with assistance on these and other endeavors to be announced in 2011.

Wishing all a great holiday season and prosperous New Year.

Sam Lovall, LLA, ASLA
President, Michigan Chapter of ASLA

ON THE COVER: DTE Corporate Energy Headquarters in Detroit, MI.
Photo Credit: Grissim Metz Andriese Associates

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SITES WINTER 2010 TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2 DTE Energy Corporate Headquarters**
Grissim Metz Andriese Associates
- 4 Pi River Waterfront Urban Design Plan**
Hamilton Anderson Associates
- 6 Central Michigan University
Outdoor Learning Center**
Beckett & Raeder, Inc.
- 8 Gilkey Creek Relocation and Restoration**
JJR
- 10 Private Residence - Northville, MI**
Russell Design, Inc.
- 12 Green Grand Rapids Infrastructure Plan**
JJR
- 14 Michigan Landscape Anthology**
Dr. Jon Burley, Michigan State University

Honor Award [Landscape Design]

DTE Energy Corporate Headquarters

Firm: Grissim Metz Andriese Associates

Client: DTE Energy Company



A westerly view reflects in the fountain pool of the gateway entrance.

DTE Energy's new corporate campus stands as an example of the rebuilding and "greening" metamorphosis occurring in Detroit today. Seven city blocks (22 acres) have undergone a transformation from greyfield asphalt and gravel parking lots into a modern day piazza, including a new building entrance lobby, various scaled gardens, walkways, tree-lined avenues, sculpted earth and water. As a result of this transformation, nine acres of gardens with over 550 trees, 6,000 shrubs, and 11,500 regenerative perennials support the vision, attracting birds and butterflies to an area where they had vanished long ago. It is a world-class reflection for this Fortune 500 Company and creates a new public presence, projecting a new image and identity.

To help accomplish this overall fete and transform dissimilar buildings into a corporate neighborhood, three city streets were dedeed to DTE Energy, narrowed (although they accommodate emergency vehicles and maintenance), and detailed to function primarily as pedestrian avenues. As part of DTE's Homeland Security commitment to provide for a secure environment, many of the landscape elements (seat walls, raised planters, pools and customized bollards) were designed to perform as barriers and deterrents, yet not portray the site as an unwelcoming campus.

It is a world-class reflection for this Fortune 500 Company and creates a new public presence, projecting a new image and identity.

The entrance into the site creates an illusion of immersion as you drive between pools and under arches that spill water from Barragan-style fountains into a calm Zen-like reflecting pool. The 26,000 square foot pool takes on the subtle appearance of a raked Japanese Garden during winter when the pool's subtle bands of black and gray washed river rock are exposed.



The view of the north lawn and amphitheater. The new pedestrian bridge connects employees to the new parking deck. Employees enjoy overlooking the campus each day on arrival and departure.

The Sun Garden offers quiet sanctuary, never revealing itself all at once. Rather, it unfolds into a series of regenerative vegetated mounds, each varying in height and diameter, rising out of circles of brightly colored pavers. In Japanese Garden vernacular, where nature is presented in miniature, these are miniature mountains. From atop the headquarters building, the geometric configuration reflects an abstract painting. Ingeniously, this work of art doubles as a corporate jogging/walkway, with varying routes. Pavers in a rainbow of hues help with orientation. Concrete seat walls emerge from the surface of the walkway system.

The Butterfly Peace Garden is a peaceful, reflective enclave, hidden at first glance as the earth builds and increases in height. Its spiraling pathway curiously draws the visitor inward along a granite curb engraved with words that encourage a new consciousness of mind: "May Peace Prevail", in 63

languages and Braille. Once inside this oasis, coneflowers, yarrow, Russian sage and other butterfly attracting plants fill the garden with color and scents as the sounds of the city disappear. A small forest of white pine trees originate in the garden and flow into the hillside, bringing a touch of northern Michigan beauty to Detroit.

On the corporate level, this transformation improves the company's image, creating a contiguous, unified and functional campus. On a grander scale, it fills this region of the city with new presence. It is memorable. Inspiring. A place where people want to be. ■

For more information contact:
Grissim Metz Andriese Associates
Northville, MI
(248) 347-7010



Honor Award [Planning and Analysis]

Pi River Waterfront Urban Design Plan

Firm: Hamilton Anderson Associates
Client: Lu'an City, Anhui Province, China

The Lu'an City Pi River Waterfront Urban Design Plan (Pi River Plan) is a collaboration between Hamilton Anderson Associates and Hefei University of Technology (the Team) to develop an urban waterfront in Anhui province of southeast China. Lu'an City is part of the Yangtze River Delta City/Town Group – a consortium of cities and towns associated with Shanghai. The city is faced with exponential growth and wishes to make the most of its regional land and human resources in an environmentally and socially responsible way.

The Design Team was selected to participate in a competition to create the urban waterfront plan

and design a new city, 12.3 square miles of land along the Pi River. The existing city of Lu'an has a population of 400,000; the new city is to be designed for 4,000,000. Requirements were extensive and the time line short: three months.

The vision for the riverfront development focuses on re-engaging the people of Lu'an City with the Pi River. Cultural relics are recognized as historical jewels. Emphasis is placed on protecting environmental quality – the river in particular, so that recreation opportunities can be maximized. Considerations for economic development were central to development of the plan.

Hamilton Anderson Associates and Hefei University of Technology traded personnel for three months, allowing both English and Chinese speakers to be in both Michigan and China at the same time; the 12 hour time difference made the process almost a 24-7 operation. Team members worked together closely on character, massing, and placement, including significant interaction with renderers, videographers and model builders in China.

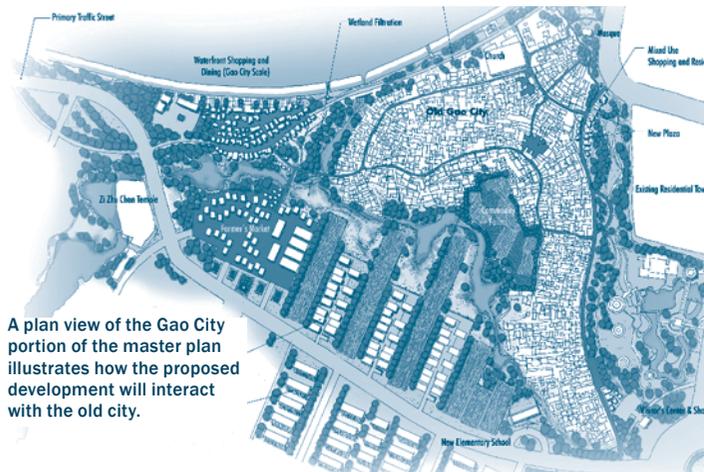
American practitioners rarely get the chance to design an entire city where the site is on water, incorporating 5,000 years of cultural heritage and where the goal is to address a degraded

environment, or where a motivated government is continuously building the city before plans are completed!

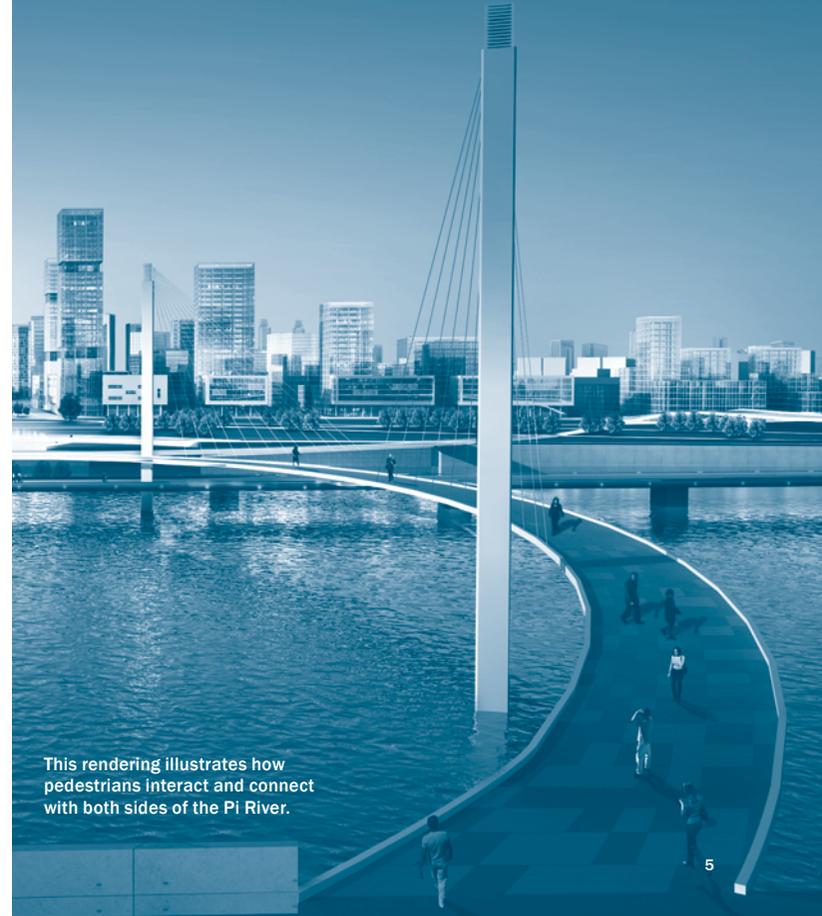
The city is faced with exponential growth and wishes to make the most of its regional land and human resources in an environmentally and socially responsible way.

This project was a truly interdisciplinary, multi-cultural effort complete with late nights, long weeks and occasional short tempers, but always with incredible energy, enthusiasm and team spirit, on both sides of the world, resulting in an extraordinary product. ■

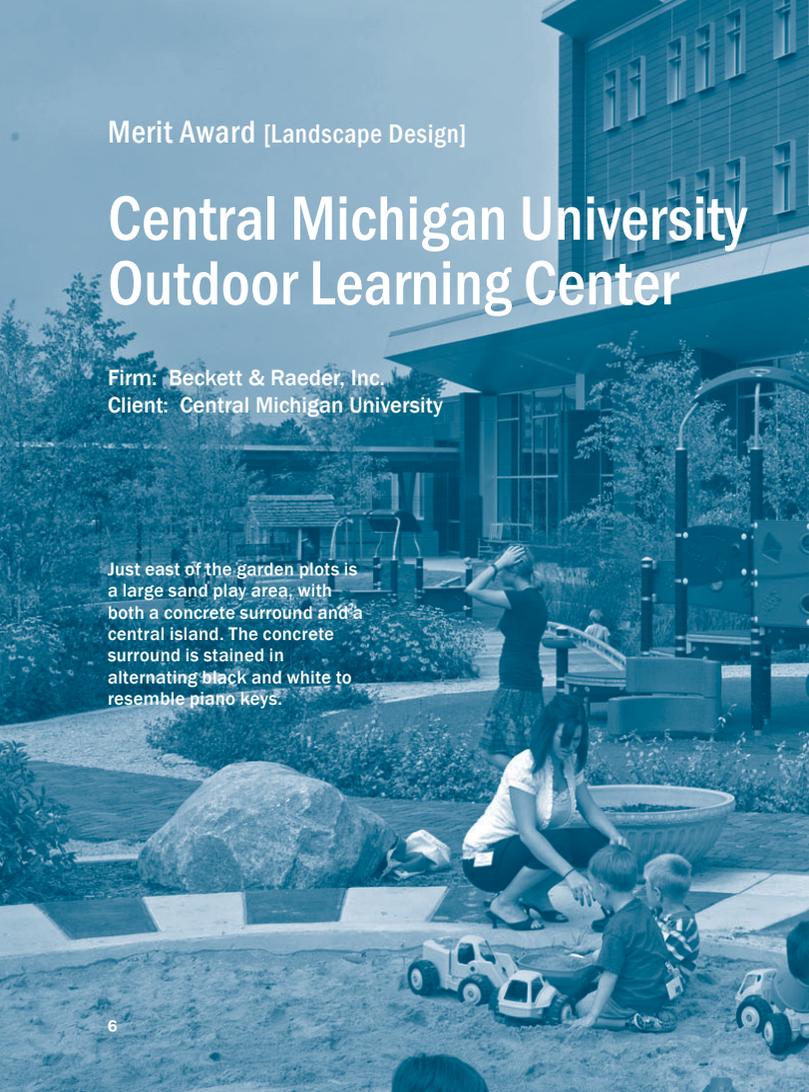
For more information contact:
Hamilton Anderson Associates
Detroit, MI
(313) 964-0270



A plan view of the Gao City portion of the master plan illustrates how the proposed development will interact with the old city.



This rendering illustrates how pedestrians interact and connect with both sides of the PI River.



Merit Award [Landscape Design]

Central Michigan University Outdoor Learning Center

Firm: Beckett & Raeder, Inc.
Client: Central Michigan University

Just east of the garden plots is a large sand play area, with both a concrete surround and a central island. The concrete surround is stained in alternating black and white to resemble piano keys.

The Outdoor Learning Center is an exterior educational and play space within Central Michigan University's Child Development and Learning Laboratory, an on-site child care facility that is part of CMU's nationally-recognized Early Childhood Development education program. The scope of the project entailed development of a year-round active and passive play space and learning environment for the pre-kindergarten age group that is an extension of the indoor classroom. The guiding philosophy was one of respecting children for who they are and all that they can accomplish by providing avenues of open-ended and flexible independent play and social engagement.

The special factors for this project included thoughtful consideration to the needs of a myriad of users and caretakers of this space: first and foremost, the children, second, the educators and care-givers, and last though not least, the maintenance staff. Each has unique needs and approaches to the space that is intended to promote both the active "burning" of childhood energy and contemplative learning, along with so many social and creative childhood endeavors in between.

The special factors for this project included thoughtful consideration to the needs of a myriad of users and caretakers of this space: first and foremost, the children, second, the educators and care-givers, and last though not least, the maintenance staff.

The plaza is of ample size for group activities, but also provides a portion of the tricycle loop requested by the Outdoor Learning Center. The remainder of the loop is provided by a secondary arc spine comprised of reclaimed brick pavers, a wood boardwalk and a wood suspension bridge. The varied textures provide multi-sensory stimulation as children traverse the loop on foot or by trike. At both ends of the arched bridge are formal play areas comprised of KOMPAN play equipment on poured-in-place safety surfacing of complementing primary colors. The Client wanted imaginative and interactive

play, with an aesthetic that avoided molded, brightly-colored plastics.

Traversing the arched bridge also represents a passage to greater physical abilities. On either side of the formal play equipment, spaces are simple landforms that provide additional vertical relief in the space, imaginative opportunities for “king of the mound” type play, and slipping and sliding opportunities in the winter months when snow cover abounds. To the far west of the space is an “enchanted forest” space. Nearby is the “secret garden,” an intimate and secluded teaching or play space surrounded by dense plant material and a concrete seat wall, with a flagstone access path from the tricycle loop and the “enchanted forest.”

Flanking the overlook bridge are garden plots for vegetables or flowers, offering a myriad of seasonal teaching opportunities. Water spigots are provided nearby, promoting hands-on watering of the “crops” and the resulting ownership of the agricultural bounty. Just east of the garden plots is a large sand play area, with both a concrete surround and a central island. The concrete surround is stained in alternating black and white to resemble piano keys. The eastern-most portion of the Outdoor Learning Center is a performance area, with an architecturally unique Reading Pavilion. The Reading Pavilion provides a small stage area, as well as a window for puppet shows. Seating is provided informally on stacked stone, boulders and bermed lawn surrounding the pavilion. The performance space is heavily landscaped to reinforce the space’s intimacy and separation from the remainder of the Outdoor Learning Center.

The project is seeking LEED Gold certification from the United States Green Building Council. Many elements in the Outdoor Learning Center contribute to the project’s LEED goals and sustainable design practices. ■

For more information contact:
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Ann Arbor, MI
(734) 663-2622



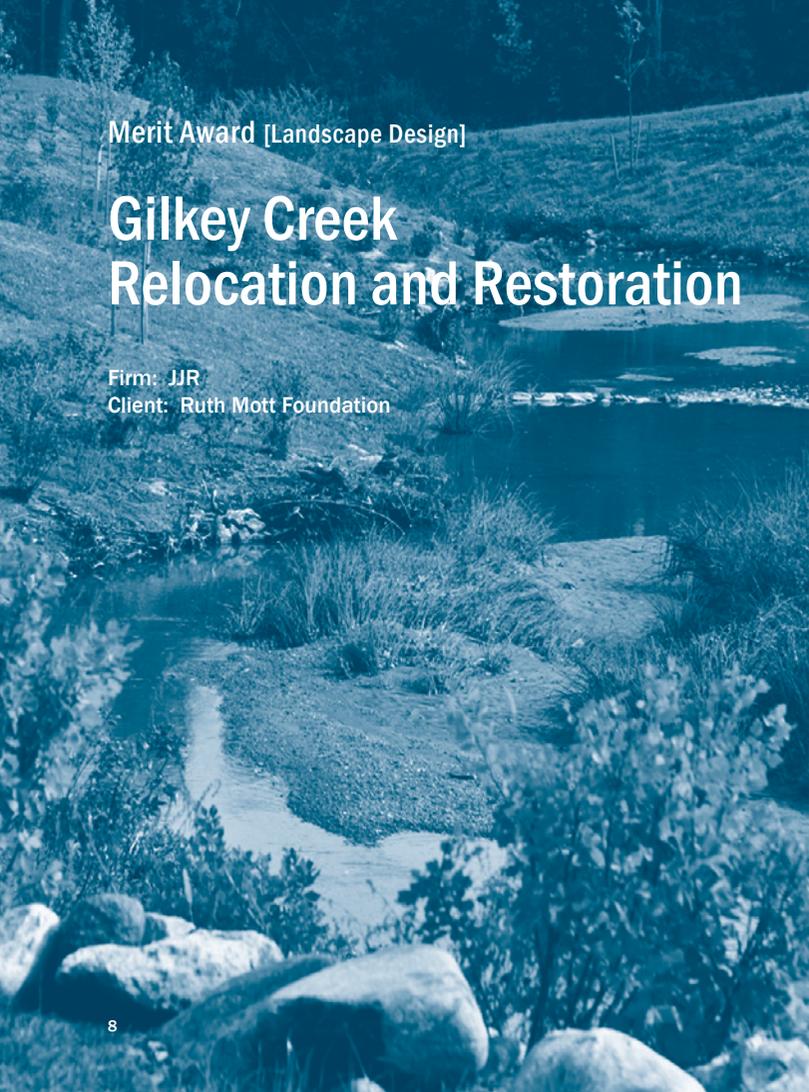
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An arched bridge traverses the dry river bed, providing opportunity for four year old children.



Merit Award [Landscape Design]

Gilkey Creek Relocation and Restoration

Firm: JJR

Client: Ruth Mott Foundation

The restoration and relocation of over a half mile of Gilkey Creek, a partially enclosed drain for 25 years, was both daylighted to effectively manage stormwater flows and enhanced to create a variety of riparian habitats along the creek corridor. The improved hydraulics, bank stabilization, and habitat restoration ended flooding on the historic Charles Stewart and Ruth Rawlings Mott Applewood estate.

JJR led the design of four alternatives to address the flooding problem. In the end, a fifth alternative that provided full restoration of the riparian corridor proved to be the best option both financially and environmentally. The fully restored creek design re-established fish and wildlife migration routes, formerly disrupted by the culvert, and completed the connection to a three mile upstream riparian corridor.

Designed to accommodate flows from a 100-year storm event, the restoration effort focused on enhancing two existing reaches and daylighting the previously enclosed reach in a new location while maintaining the culvert as an overflow system for larger storm events. In January 2009, a 50-year storm posed the channel's first test in which neither Applewood nor areas upstream experienced flooding. Flood-related restoration has been eliminated and clean-up costs have been reduced by 95%, realizing an average annual savings of \$10,000-\$15,000 for Ruth Mott Foundation (RMF).

Impervious surfaces within the project area were reduced by 22%. The conversion of nearly seven acres of pavement and lawn into the restored channel and native landscapes reduced long-term maintenance costs for the site by 50%, an estimated annual savings of \$20,000 for RMF.

Boulders, tree roots, and logs were harvested on site to create habitat structures and serve as bank erosion control measures. Habitat creation for a variety of flora and fauna included design features such as plunge pools, riffles, eddy rocks, a pond, and a continuous riparian buffer.

A half-acre pond, designed with a wetland fringe, replaced underused tennis courts to improve storage capacity within the floodplain and to provide a source of water for irrigating Applewood's Inspiration Gardens. The pond provides open water habitat for wildlife and aquatic vegetation and also serves as an outdoor environmental education classroom.

The plants used in restoration of the riparian corridor were all native to Michigan. Over 200 trees, 3,000 shrubs, 1,200 aquatic plants and seven acres of native seeding were installed on the project. To prevent invasive weed species from taking control, a stringent maintenance regimen was executed during native seed establishment and is ongoing to date.

Nearly 100% of all materials from demolition were recycled (concrete, asphalt, metal, soil) and either reused on-site (trees, roots, stones, gravel base for wall backfill) or salvaged and donated to other entities for reuse (parking lot lights, a pedestrian footbridge, and wood chips). On-site materials cost savings equaled \$38,000.

Partnership opportunities were created with the adjacent community college, cultural center, school district, parks department, and neighborhood groups through public involvement during the design and construction process. The success of this project has strengthened RMF's position within the community as a leader in environmental stewardship and education. ■



Photo, left: The plants used in restoration of the riparian corridor were all native to Michigan. Over 200 trees, 3,000 shrubs, 1,200 aquatic plants and seven acres of native seeding were installed on the project.

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Merit Award [Landscape Design]

Private Residence Northville, MI

Firm: Russell Design
Client: Private

Following an afternoon dip in the pool, one can enjoy lunch and refreshments prepared in the outdoor kitchen and bar beneath the dappled shade of the custom mahogany pergola.

This private residence incorporates client program requirements into an organized sequence of outdoor rooms; each working collectively to welcome individuals with a quiet place to pause, while simultaneously catering to larger gatherings. The strong and formal architecture is complemented by axial walkways and simple geometric forms juxtaposed by informal massing of flowering understory plant material. The clarity of spatial structure, transition between spaces, simple use of quality materials and attention to detail exude warmth, charm, and timeless design.

The landscape architect acting as prime consultant, and in the capacity of construction manager, successfully coordinated construction related issues with the builder, project civil and structural engineers, and building trades to ensure the client's program fit the framework of the site's natural features. The large footprint home and 27 foot grade change across the site presented unique design and construction challenges. A combination of natural and

man made elements were used to harmoniously weave the functional design elements into the topography while preserving the significant natural features of the site.

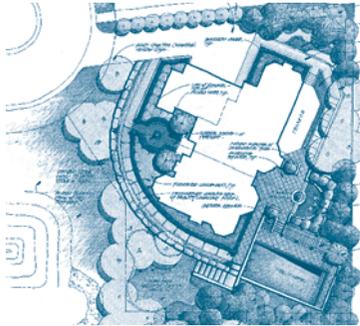
From the driveway, guests are invited to the main entry along a carpet of random set bluestone. A rosette of natural cleft and smooth bluestone inlaid with lavender colored bluestone marks the transition point that takes the visitor to the front entrance or allows them to continue around toward the rear yard. Guests continuing down the cascading bluestone steps are greeted by a pair of limestone piers marking a transition that leads one either to the play house or the main entertaining terrace.

A whimsical child's play house is nestled among the mature white pine and hardwoods that surround the site. The play house sits nine feet below the bluestone path and steps. The main terrace is highlighted by the custom

four sided 12' tall fire place. Portable furniture allows for many configurations and additional tables and chairs to be brought in when entertaining. The fire place is shared by a sunken 'conversation pit' that offers an intimate place for solitude and respite. Just a few steps away and approximately three feet lower in elevation than the main terrace, the negative edge pool and water sconces provide a refreshing oasis from the heat of the mid-summer Michigan sun.

Following an afternoon dip in the pool, one can enjoy lunch and refreshments prepared in the outdoor kitchen / bar beneath the dappled shade of the custom mahogany pergola.

Leading away from the main entertaining terrace, the dry-laid limestone steps provide a more informal route to the upper terrace and the private end of the house. ■



The site plan (left) illustrates how the strong and formal architecture is complemented by axial walkways and simple geometric forms juxtaposed by informal massings of flowering understory plant material. The clarity of spatial structure, transition between spaces, simple use of quality materials and attention to detail exude warmth, charm, and timeless design.

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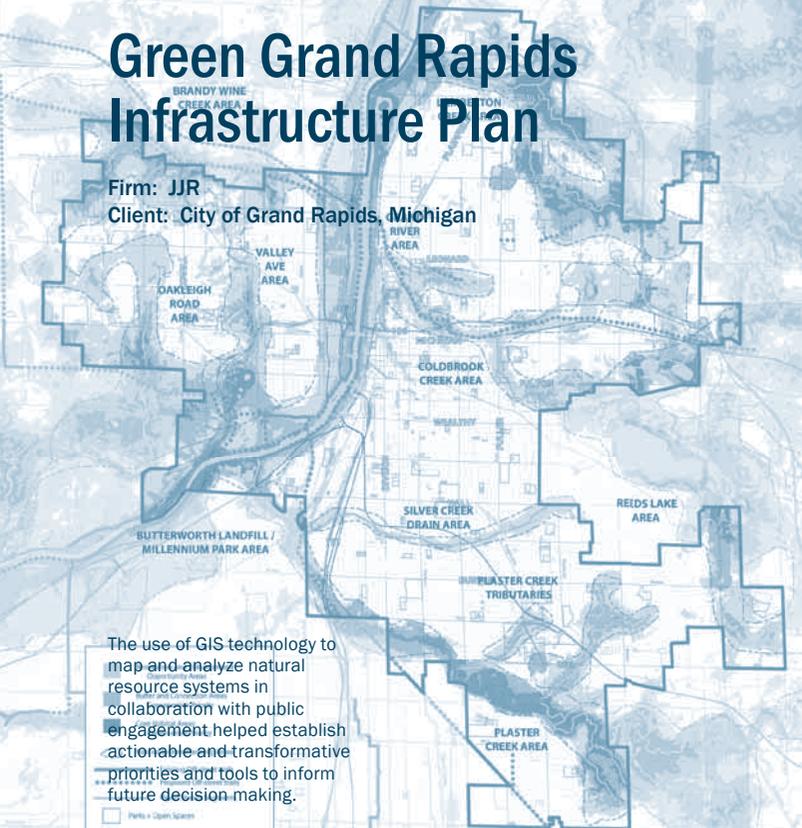
MAP DESCRIPTION:
 The ecological framework presents the following information: selected natural resource areas, high diversity areas, and high priority areas that should be targeted for preservation, conservation, and/or potential restoration and expansion opportunities.

Merit Award [Landscape Planning and Analysis]

Green Grand Rapids Infrastructure Plan

Firm: JJR

Client: City of Grand Rapids, Michigan



The use of GIS technology to map and analyze natural resource systems in collaboration with public engagement helped establish actionable and transformative priorities and tools to inform future decision making.

Green Grand Rapids is a citywide green infrastructure master planning process focused on quality of life and the physical development of community infrastructure as it relates to parks, the urban forest, non-motorized connections, natural systems, Grand River recreation and local food. As a sustainability-focused update to the city's 2002 master plan, Green Grand Rapids proposes a range of strategies for creating an interconnected network of green spaces that provide valuable ecological services and improve the quality of life, environmental health and economic resilience of the community and its citizens. An array of GIS analyses methods and public engagement/outreach processes set the stage for implementation and lasting support.

As the primary planners and public facilitators, JJR led a 30-member steering committee through 19 meetings over 18 months, organized and facilitated four, city-wide "green gathering" workshops, conducted stakeholder interviews, carried out a series of special study projects, managed the GIS inventory and analysis work (resulting in the production of over 30 maps to serve as tools for future decision making) and drafted the plan's objectives, strategies, and action plans.

Two of the special study projects included a Kayak Run, (prepared by Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber) and the Riverwalk Extension (prepared by both JJR and Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber). The Kayak Run study identified opportunities (e.g., a catalyst for downtown investment, enhancement of the riparian environment) and challenges (e.g., cost of construction and operation and balancing uses for different interests) and developed a preferred concept and order-of-magnitude costs for two phases in constructing a 'rapids' run for kayaks and canoes on the river's downtown reach.

On the Riverwalk Extension study, concepts were developed for closing a critical gap in the riverwalk system between downtown and the Wealthy Street bridge to create a connection to proposed trails at Butterworth Landfill and existing trails at Millennium Park, farther south. The study proposed a short-term riverwalk alignment, and considered the future

development of the 201 Market Street site. In addition, guidelines for bank restoration and the riverwalk's width, materials and minimum elevation were provided.

The use of GIS technology to map and analyze natural resource systems in collaboration with public engagement helped establish actionable and transformative priorities and tools to inform future decision making. This approach helped fuel citizen input and collaboration in generating green ideas and turning those ideas into actions. Existing organizations began adopting elements of the green agenda, even as new groups were formed during the planning process to implement other priority strategies. Green Grand Rapids became a model for how to rethink government during tough times and leverage the capacity of residents to improve their own community. According to City Manager Greg Sundstrom, "As a city, we are going to provide a platform for the community to come together and organize and do things. We will help you engage. Then we need you to make it happen." ■



Photo, left: JJR led the Green Grand Rapids team through a series of community meetings. It was a vital component to the outcome of the study to include community members and their input throughout the process.

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Several special study areas, like this one along Market Street, illustrated the potential development opportunities along the Grand River.





Merit Award [Research]

Michigan Landscape Anthology

Dr. Jon Burley, Michigan State University

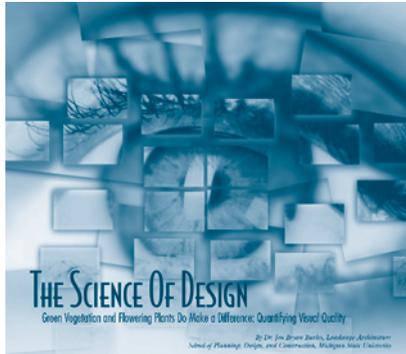
The Landscape Michigan Anthology is a series of five papers with the purpose to facilitate sensitivity, understanding, and intellectual growth for the Michigan Green Industry audience by presenting, illustrating, and discussing selected design issues and opportunities in the environment by writing one or two articles a year intended for readers of The Michigan Landscape, a trade publication. The landscape architect, Dr. Jon Bryan Burley was the lead author and initiator for each paper and Yu Wang was the co-author for one of the papers.

Practitioners often have relatively little professional time to communicate to members of the Michigan Green Industry concerning theory, describing the practical impact of recent research, advancing design opportunities, or featuring their projects. Therefore, the entrant for this award category was interested in communicating with the Michigan Green Industry to promote projects, ideas, and materials based in landscape architecture, ecology, social science, and horticulture. The collection is an anthology of “stand-alone” topics suitable for consumption by the Michigan Green Industry. The collection of papers includes:

1. The Design Concept: Intellectual Landscapes in Michigan. The Michigan Landscape, (2006), 49 (12) :33-40. This paper illustrates the rise and development of the design concept and explains why landscape architects often employ the concept in design. The paper features designs and landscape architects in Michigan and California.
2. The Science of Design: Green Vegetation and Flowering Plants Do Make A Difference: Quantifying Visual Quality. The Michigan Landscape, (2006) 49 (8) :27-30. This paper presents recent findings in visual quality research and explains why the values embedded within landscape architecture are important in environmental design and greatly appreciated by the general population.
3. Minnesota Azaleas for Michigan Gardens: A Non-Native Planting Environment. The Michigan Landscape, (2007), 50 (5) :33-39. This paper presents a new palette of plant materials developed in Minnesota, describes the Michigan connection to these plants, and discusses their suitability for Michigan landscapes.

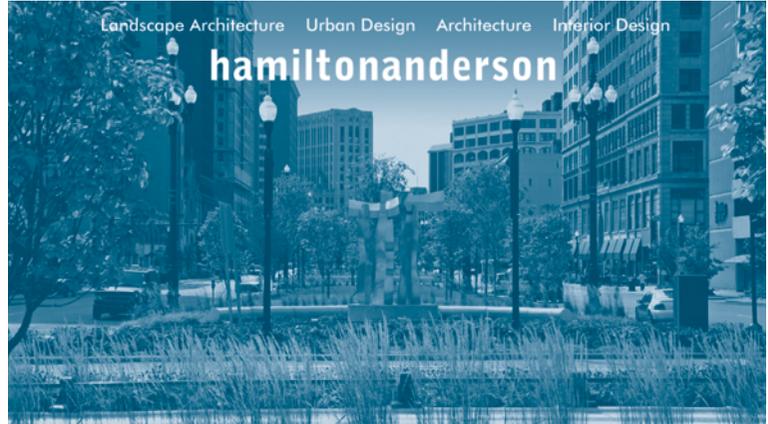
4. The New Ecology of Urban Savanna. The Michigan Landscape, (2008) 51 (10) :41-47. Based upon recent ecological research, this paper presents an upbeat perspective and potential concerning suburban environments.

5. Collector's (Trophy Trees) Desired Plants for Across The Globe: A Michigan and Chinese Perspective. The Michigan Landscape, (2009), 52 (10) :26-33. This paper relates the global phenomena of plant collecting and ties the activity to a Michigan context. ■



About the authors: Dr. Jon Bryan Burley is an associate professor of landscape architecture at Michigan State University in the School of Planning, Design, and Construction. Yu Wang earned her Urban Planning degree at Nanjing Forestry University, and currently resides in Michigan.

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