

Texas Architect

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Willis Winters, FAIA

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Open House



Ecologies



A Walk in the Park



Rosannah Sandoval, AIA
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The Buffalo Bayou Promenade is woven through previously impenetrable highway interchanges. The project introduced 23 acres of parkland in Houston's inner city, linking downtown to the waterway.

Urban Ecologies

by Catherine Gavin, Editor

With its stacked interchanges and sweeping flyovers, the U.S. highway system offers plenty of poetic beauty, and Texas has no shortage of roadway feats — witness the 26-lane stretches of the Katy Freeway and five-level junctions in Dallas and Houston. Our state's freeway system has grown exponentially since its inception in 1954, and today, urban designers are rethinking highways, which have effectively become barriers in downtown districts.

In Dallas, The Office of James Burnett-designed Klyde Warren Park, built over the Woodall Rogers Freeway, now links downtown to the Arts District and Uptown and is encouraging calls for razing a 1.4-mile section of Inter-

Urban design and landscape architecture are stitching together, reinvigorating, and redefining key sections of Texas cities.

state 345 that separates downtown from Deep Ellum. In Austin, urban designer Sinclair Black, FAIA, is advocating sinking Interstate 35 from 15th Street to Lady Bird Lake. This initiative, which gained significant momentum throughout 2013, calls for dense mixed-use development over the freeway tunnel to bridge downtown and East Austin. In Houston, downtown is now connected to Buffalo Bayou via a greenway woven underneath and through layers of roadways. SWA Group led the project, creating 23 acres of parkland for pedestrians and cyclists. Urban design and landscape architecture are stitching

together, reinvigorating, and redefining key sections of Texas cities with a focus on pedestrian-level connectivity and ecological infrastructures.

In this "Ecologies" issue, Frederick R. Steiner argues that continued pressure on natural resources due to expected population growth necessitates green infrastructure that provides ecological benefit. He points out that Texas' changing cultural makeup will further challenge designers to create meaningful public spaces for the entire population. Victoria Sambunaris' photographs capture vast landscapes of the Texas-Mexico border, portraying the impact of both trade and natural disasters on rural ecologies.

The projects explored demonstrate the vision and transformative impact of green infrastructure in San Antonio, Houston, Austin, and Dallas. We also feature El Paso's first net-zero senior housing project, a mixed-use development in downtown Austin, and the bid to make San Antonio missions the first World Heritage site in Texas — all examples of successful urban design initiatives. We thank Dean Almy, AIA, Guy Haggestate, FAIA, and Irby Hightower, FAIA, for their significant contributions to this issue; all three are members of Texas Architects' newly established Urban Design Committee.



Embracing the Edge

by Brett Koenig Greig

Project Edgeland House, Austin

Client Chris Brown

Architect Bercy Chen Studio

Design Team Calvin Chen, Assoc. AIA; Thomas Bercy; Ryan Michael; Brad Purrington; Daniel Loe; Augustina Rodriguez

Photographer Paul Bardagiy



Thomas Bercy, of Bercy Chen Studio, cringes at the mention of curb appeal. For him, too many residential projects are presented as a big statement at the entry, leaving the rest of the building as an afterthought. He and his design partner, Calvin Chen, Assoc. AIA, took a very different approach for the Edgeland House, a 1,500-sf home hidden away in an industrial corner of East Austin. The house is obscured from the street by its siting, buried seven feet below grade. A passer-by can only see its atypical front yard — two triangular roofs covered in local prairie grasses peeling sharply up from the ground. In designing the Edgeland House, Bercy Chen merged architecture, land art, and ecology to create an inward-looking home with broad-reaching benefits for the local habitat.

In 2009, Chris Brown bought a one-acre lot on a bluff overlooking the Colorado River. For years, the attorney and science fiction writer had been canoeing this stretch of river, drawn to what he calls pockets of “interstitial wild nature” inadvertently preserved within the surrounding industrial

zoning. Overgrown with willow trees and other invasive species, the property had long been a dumping ground for construction crews and transients, and through its center ran a decommissioned oil pipeline from the

The scar of disturbed earth provided a unique opportunity to partially bury the new house into the hillside.

1920s. Brown’s law background proved essential in helping him overcome the arduous regulatory hurdles he encountered when working with the City to remove the pipeline, clear the site’s environmental liability, abandon the utility easement, and prepare the land for residential use.

Brown brought a very particular design problem to Bercy Chen. He wanted the designers to articulate this fraught site as the transition zone



between rough and ugly human development and the remnants of wild nature that exist inside the city. Bercy Chen responded to this challenging brief with a dramatic scheme inspired by origami folds and fragmentation. While removing the pipeline had been a difficult task, the scar of disturbed earth provided a unique opportunity to partially bury the new house into the hillside. Bercy Chen studied an ancient North American housing typology, the Pit House, which takes advantage of the earth's mass to maintain thermal comfort throughout the year. The result of the team's conceptual exploration is more sculpture than building; the ground seems to have split apart, revealing two crystalline polygons under cantilevering triangular roofs that point toward the river beyond.

The house is organized around a central courtyard spine, which serves as the *promenade architecturale*, a term Le Corbusier used to describe the procession through Villa Savoye at Poissy (1928). "You have to move through architecture to appreciate architecture," said Bercy. Arriving at the house, one descends into the courtyard via a wide concrete stair. Tall curtain walls of glass rise up on either side and offer various perceptions of the space, depending on the time of day. When the sun is directly overhead, the glass is transparent, and the interior — an open living area and kitchen in the volume to the right, and two bedrooms with an office loft to the left — is completely visible as one follows the snaking path of the courtyard. When the sun is low, however, the opposing glass facades become prismatic, reflecting each other, the sky, and the grasses and vines that grow over the roof edge.





Previous spread *The texture and color of the Texas Blackland Prairie roof starkly contrasts the spare interior of the home.*

This spread *One's perception of the two volumes changes throughout the day. During daylight hours, the glazed panels reflect each other, but by the evening, the glass becomes highly transparent, unifying the living spaces.*



This page *Origami-*
inspired roof projections
create an intimate, shaded
courtyard that is softened
by the surrounding grasses
and a pool.

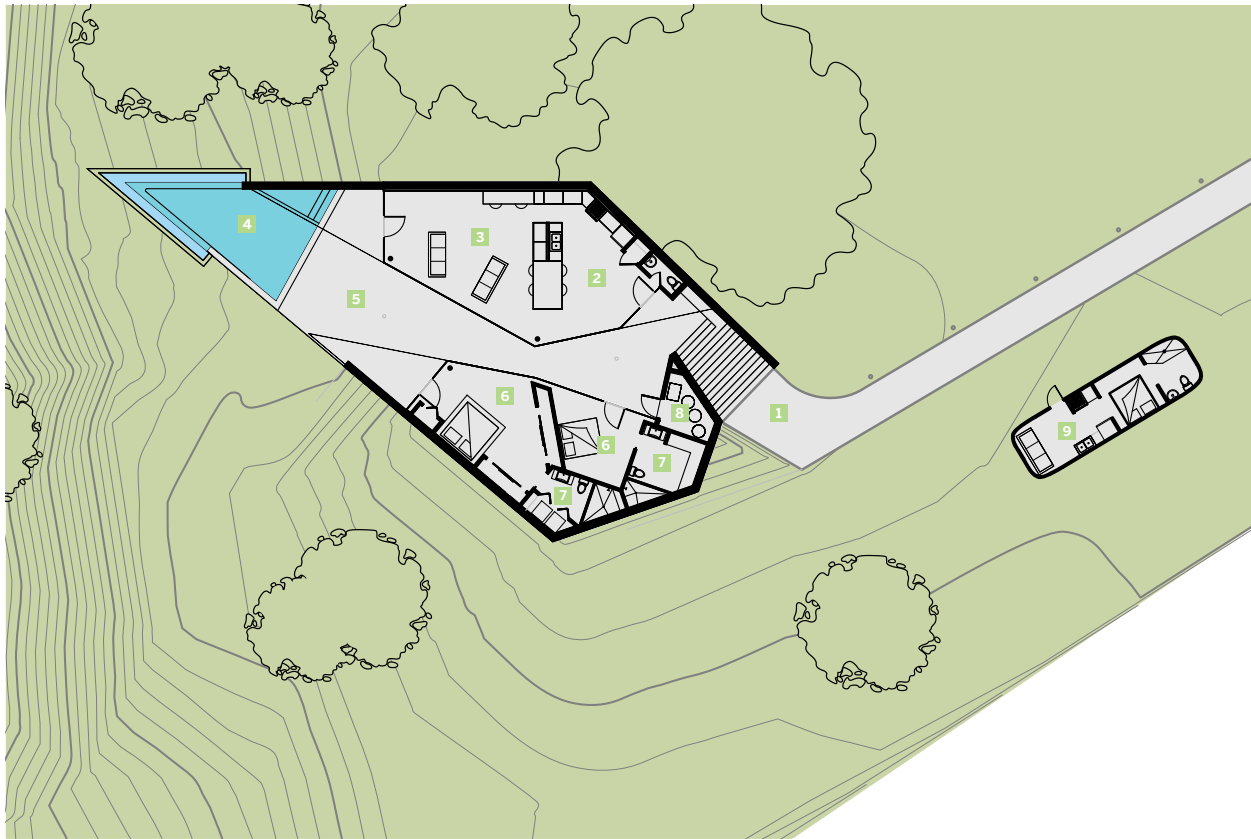


Bercy Chen's earliest renderings of the house hinted at “wild nature” on the roof contrasting with the pristine interior space below. “We began with this idea of the seamless between the site and the building, and privacy from the street.” But Bercy admitted, “We didn’t really think about the ecosystem and habitat aspect,” when imagining the green roof. Bercy and Brown eventually recognized the roof as an integral component to the restoration of the site, and they enlisted the Ecosystem Design Group (EDG) at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to devise an appropriate planting solution.

For years, EDG had been researching green roof failure in Texas. The technology for these roofs was developed in Northern Europe, and the sedum species used there were not adapting well to the temperature extremes of Central Texas nor to its sporadic rainfall. In response, EDG developed a proprietary growing medium that allows for proper moisture control and temperature regulation, but that is also lightweight enough for roof installation.

They decided to treat the Edgeland House as a micro Texas Blackland Prairie, a habitat that has shrunk to less than one percent of its original size due to agriculture and development. A diverse complement of 75 native grasses and plant species was installed over the roof and grounds. “Urban areas are typically the antithesis of a healthy ecosystem,” said John Hart Asher, an environmental designer with EDG. “But if we could do enough small projects, Austin could actually become one of the largest preserves of Blackland Prairie in the state.”

It has been 18 months since the green roof was installed, and by all accounts, the habitat restoration of this pocket of riparian corridor has been incredibly successful. It is home not just to Brown and his family, but also to an array of wildlife. Migratory birds, insects, amphibians, and even



- FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 ENTRY
 - 2 KITCHEN
 - 3 LIVING ROOM
 - 4 SMART POOL
 - 5 PATIO
 - 6 BEDROOM
 - 7 BATHROOM
 - 8 MECHANICAL ROOM
 - 9 GUEST TRAILER

- SECTIONS**
- 1 STUDY
 - 2 MASTER BEDROOM
 - 3 KITCHEN
 - 4 LIVING
 - 5 DINING
 - 6 POOL
 - 7 BEDROOM

foxes find refuge on the roof, and coral snakes hunt for lizards in the courtyard. While most urban homeowners try to deter these so-called pests, this one delights in the biodiversity.

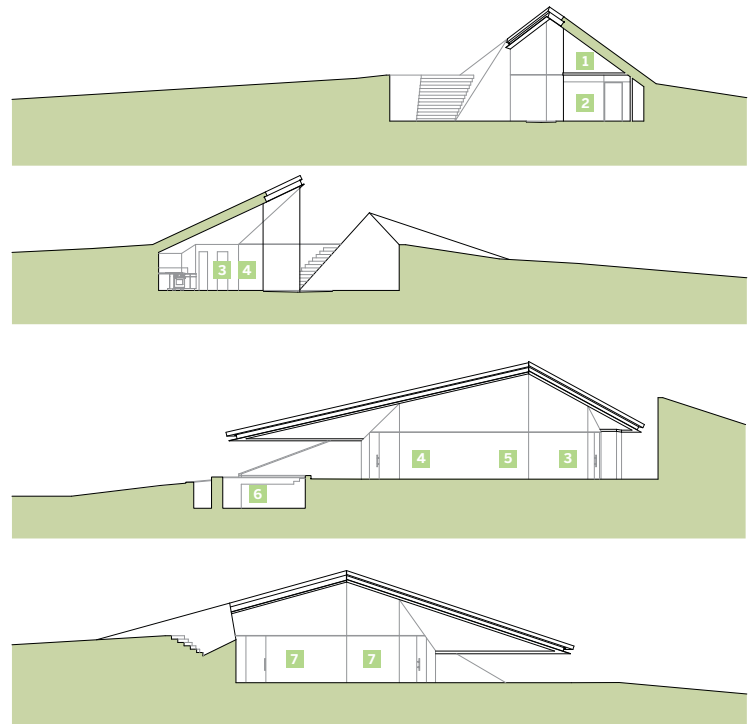
Brown named his house after reading “Edgelands” by the English poets Paul Farley and Michael Symmons Roberts. In his 2012 essay “Science Fiction in the Edgelands,” Brown noted that the term “edgelands” was a way

“Urban areas are typically the antithesis of a healthy ecosystem, but ... Austin could actually become one of the largest preserves of Blackland Prairie in the state.”

for the poets “to describe the unnamed transitional zones created where urban development meets open land.”

“By giving a name to these invisible places that exist at the margins of all our cities, they provide the rest of us with a vocabulary to use to be able to see these places,” said Brown. “Edgelands represent the potential for liberated territory.” A fruitful collaboration between Brown, Bercy Chen Studio, and EDG transformed one such marginal place into a verdant laboratory for building on the ecological and urban fringe.

Brett Koenig Greig is an architect with Loop Design in Austin.



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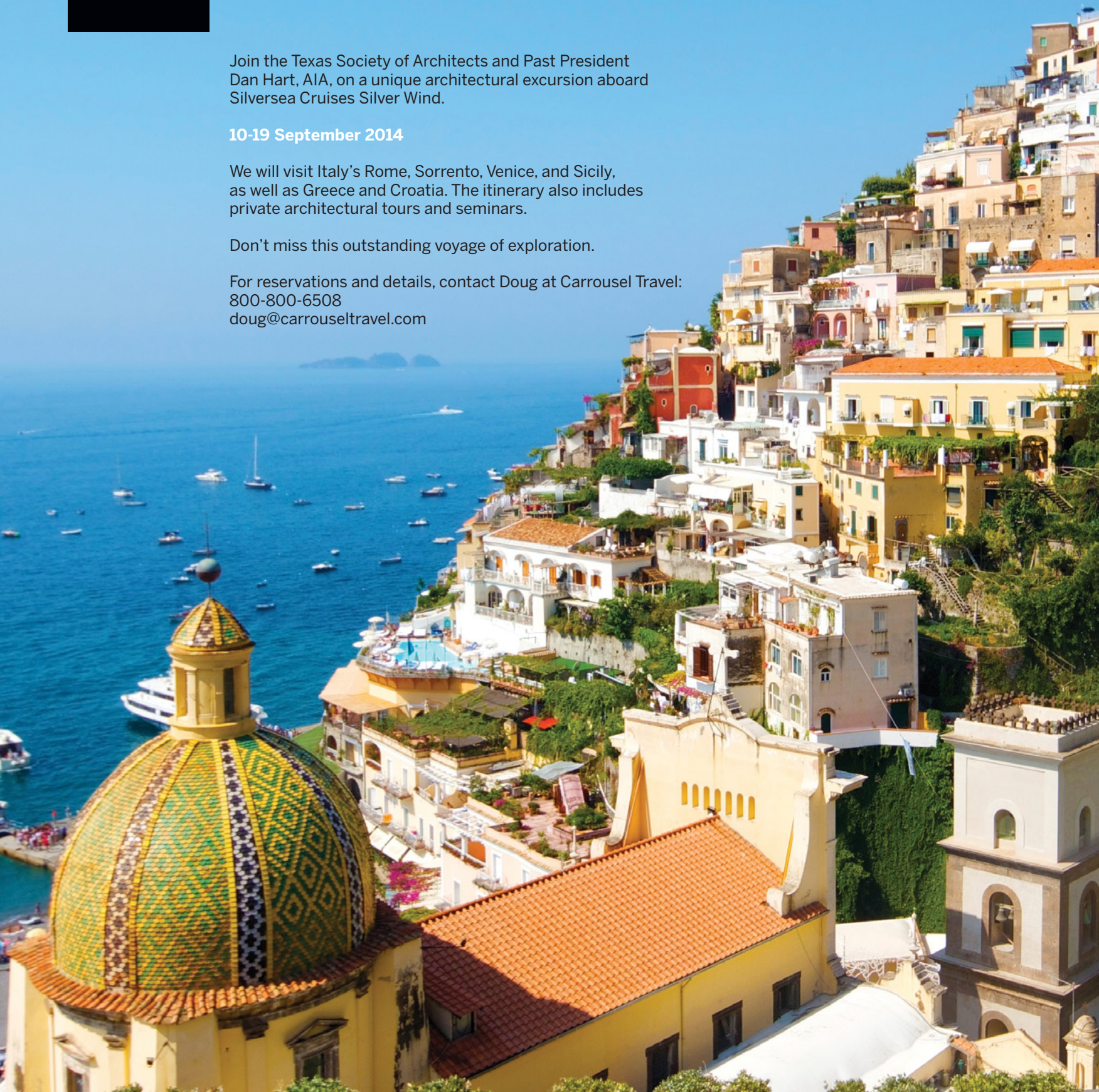
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This issue on “Ecologies” explores urban design across Texas and focuses on the increasing importance of green infrastructure for our cities. With the rehabilitation of the San Antonio River, the state now has the longest linear park in the nation. Dallas is also leading urban design trends with its progressive parks plan — Klyde Warren Park is just one example of the good work being done. Houston and Austin are also both relying on green infrastructure to create valuable public spaces.

Other important urban design initiatives featured include mixed-use development in downtown Austin, El Paso’s first net-zero senior housing project, and the push for San Antonio’s missions to be added to the World Heritage List.

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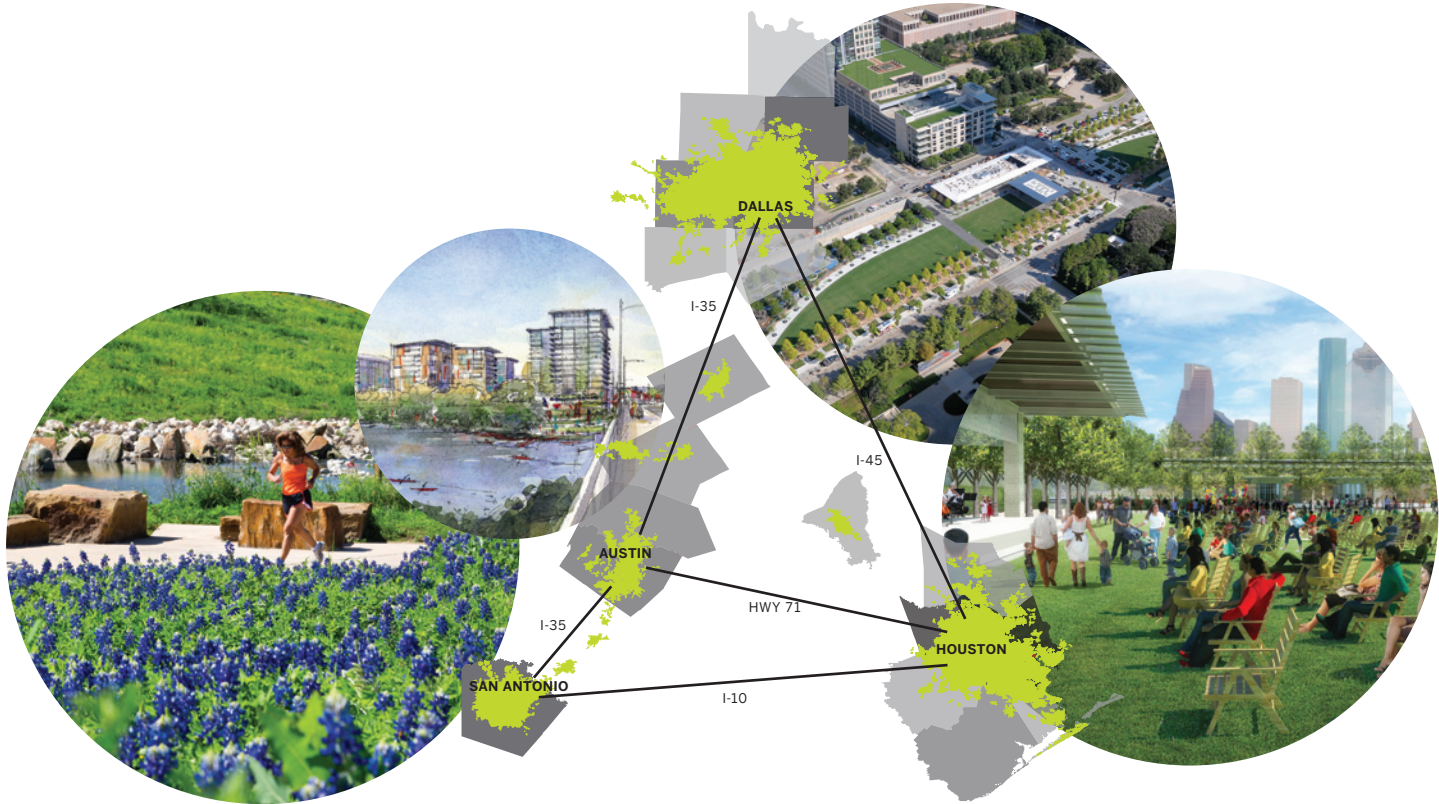
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Rachel Wright, AIA, and Anna Nau



New Urban Tapestries

by Frederick R. Steiner

As one of the fastest growing megaregions in the nation, the Texas Triangle has a crucial need for well-designed open spaces. Recent examples include Dallas' Klyde Warren Park, Houston's Buffalo Bayou Park, San Antonio's Mission Reach, and Austin's South Shore Waterfront.

The myth and image of Texas are country and western. The reality of the state is that it is urban and becoming more so and, in the process, changing the concept of “western.” An estimated 85 percent of the 26 million Texans live in urban regions. Of the state’s total population, some 75 percent live in the Texas Triangle, one of the eleven fastest growing megaregions in the United States. The Texas Triangle is formed with Houston and San Antonio at the base, Dallas-Fort Worth at the apex, and Austin in between. By 2050, around 30 million people, 70 percent of Texas’ projected population, will live in the four metropolitan areas that make up the megaregion. Between 2010 and 2050, the overall Texas Triangle will grow by 93.3 percent and reach over 38 million people. Outside the Triangle, the El Paso-Juarez Borderplex represents a significant urban conglomeration.

As Texas has grown, ranch and farmlands around cities have disappeared along with valuable wildlife habitat. With the epic drought of the past few years, water has become scarcer, and many trees have died. In 2011, the state lost as much as 10 percent of its trees due to drought — that is, somewhere between 300 and 500 million trees. Wildfires have destroyed additional vegetation as well as buildings. Although Texas is energy-rich, the energy-water nexus

poses challenges. Increased energy use requires more water — and more water, especially hot water, increases energy consumption. Water use holds a fundamental key to the future of Texas. Abundant in the past, water provides ecosystem services largely taken for granted. The drought has altered this perspective.

As a result, the green spaces within cities have become more valuable. We call interconnected open spaces that provide ecosystem services “green infrastructure” or “ecological infrastructure.” Ecosystem services are the things we derive from nature that have been traditionally viewed as free, such as the relative abundance of water historically in Texas, clean air and water, oxygen production, crop pollination, wildlife habitat, and the warmth of the sun. Green infrastructure helps to maximize the benefits of these services.

Texas is on the front line of national and global urbanization trends and can be a leader with ecological responses in cities. Early in the 21st century, the planet became majority urban. In response, over the past several decades, new, innovative green spaces have been planned and designed. Around the world, the most compelling new landscapes transform previously abandoned and polluted sites. These efforts provide models for Texas.

MAP AND POPULATION DATA PROVIDED BY UT AUSTIN TUFELAB. PHOTO OF KLYDE WARREN PARK BY AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY, INC. RENDERING OF BUFFALO BAYOU PARK COURTESY PAGE. FORMERLY PAGESOUTHERLANDPAGE. PHOTO OF MISSION REACH COURTESY THE SAN ANTONIO RIVER AUTHORITY. RENDERING OF SOUTH SHORE WATERFRONT COURTESY AIA SPAT.

In Seattle, landscape architect Rich Haag rescued an abandoned gas works complex and converted it into a park. In Germany, landscape architect and urban planner Peter Latz performed a similar industrial metamorphosis with *Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord*. In Paris, a deserted, elevated rail line became the *Promenade Plantée* in 1988, two decades before landscape architect James Corner led a team that performed a similar conversion with the High Line in Lower Manhattan. In Madrid and Seoul, highways have been removed and replaced with parks. In Boston, an interstate highway was buried, with new green spaces placed above. A smaller stretch of highway now has the active Klyde Warren Park as a roof in Dallas.

More ambitious projects are tackling even more derelict and hopeless places, such as a polluted canal in Brooklyn and a poisonous river in Newark. Architect-landscape architect Susannah Drake and her Brooklyn-based dlandstudio proposed an innovative scheme called Sponge Park to restore the Gowanus Canal. Added to the National Priorities List of Superfund sites issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2012, the Gowanus Canal flows through several neighborhoods that were industrial and manufacturing powerhouses during the last two centuries, before emptying into the New York Harbor. The basic idea for this new type of public open space is to create a system of rain gardens. These gardens will collect and cleanse stormwater before it enters the canal. Between rain events, the gardens will create accessible, open space amenities for underserved neighborhoods. The concept is to reduce paved surfaces and replace them with green surfaces that recharge water and can be used by people of all ages.

Across New York Harbor, in Newark, New Jersey, Lee Weintraub Landscape Architecture is making over another EPA Superfund site, the Passaic River. Formerly the dumping ground for dioxin from the defunct company that manufactured Agent Orange, the Passaic is hazardous to fish and people. The scheme is to reclaim the river and convert it from a flowing corridor of shame into a place of civic pride. As a central feature of this effort, a new riverfront park featuring an orange boardwalk has been designed by Weintraub.

Back in Texas, we are not only growing more urban, we are also becoming more diverse. Cowboys, even the urban type, are being replaced by *vaqueros*, as the state has become majority minor-

ity. Since 2004, ethnic minorities, the majority of which are Latinos, have outnumbered those whom the U.S. Census classifies as “whites.” The challenge for architects, landscape architects, and planners, then, becomes to design more interconnected green infrastructure and to do so with greater cultural sensitivity.

How do we accomplish this task? For starters, we need a new urban ecological aesthetic. This aesthetic would help connect our actions to the web of social and biophysical processes that surround us. The new George W. Bush Presidential Center at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas provides a contrast between a traditional aesthetic and a more ecological approach that is setting a new precedent.

The 15-acre park, designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), provides a dramatic contrast to both the LEED Platinum

As a result [of population growth and drought], the green spaces within cities have become more valuable.

certified, Robert Stern-designed building, which reflects the prevailing conservative aesthetic of the campus, and the manicured grass lawns that represent the traditional campus landscape. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Ecosystem Design Group was a consultant to the MVVA team. Wildflower Center scientists developed a native grass mix called HABITURF for the arid regions of Texas that was used, in combination with other native species, throughout the Bush Center. These plants appear messier and wilder than traditional grass lawns. In addition, bioswales in the park recycle and clean stormwater



	DALLAS	HOUSTON	AUSTIN	SAN ANTONIO
City Limits				
Population	1,256,588	2,235,760	750,367	1,310,777
Change since 2000	5.77%	14.44%	14.35%	14.49%
Density per sq mile	3,668	3,859	2,983	3,216
Metro Areas				
Population	6,352,460	5,818,687	1,659,082	2,051,014
Change since 2000	23.00%	23.40%	32.74%	19.86%
Density per sq mile	707	652	393	279
Air Quality 0-100	28.4	18.4	44.8	25.8
Water Quality 0-100	84	51	85	88
Superfund Sites	82	56	99	96

runoff and reduce irrigation needs. The native plants also provide habitat for birds, butterflies, and other species. This rather radical departure from the carefully groomed lawn aesthetic of SMU and much of Texas raises the bar for ecological design in the state.

Texas cities are leading urban growth and becoming centers of design innovation. For

The challenge for architects, landscape architects, and planners becomes to design more interconnected green infrastructure and to do so with greater cultural sensitivity.

instance, as described in this issue of *Texas Architect*, Buffalo Bayou Park revitalizes a green corridor in Houston; Klyde Warren Park connects two central city districts of Dallas; improvements continue to expand the value of the San Antonio River to more communities; and two proposals in Austin present a bold new vision for the city.

Texas cities possess considerable potential to advance green infrastructure and urban ecological aesthetics. The potential rests on two factors beyond the growth rate. First, the population diversity presents particular challenges and opportunities. We need to better understand the culture and building traditions of Latin America. Second, Texas cities differ significantly from one another, setting up several urban design laboratories. The necessity to construct new urban ecologies is evident. As Texas cities continue to grow, we need to expand, rather than deplete, ecosystem services, especially those related to water, through design and planning. Our future depends on these services. Trend is not destiny, as Lewis Mumford observed. The growth of Texas cannot be sustained without enhancing the ecological processes of the state.

Frederick R. Steiner is a fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and dean of The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture.

Clockwise from left *On the East Coast, Lee Weintraub's Passaic River Park and dlandstudio's Sponge Park are transforming EPA Superfund sites into community assets. Meanwhile, in Dallas, Michael Van Valkenburgh's park for the George W. Bush Presidential Center presents a model for a new ecological landscape aesthetic for Texas.*



PHOTO OF PASSAIC RIVER PARK BY COLIN COOKE. RENDERING OF SPONGE PARK COURTESY DLANDSTUDIO. PHOTO OF GEORGE W. BUSH PRESIDENTIAL CENTER BY MICHAEL MALONE, AIA.

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On the Bayou

by Guy Hagstette, FAIA

Urban design involves big ideas that take time to be realized. In 1912, Houstonians approved park bonds to implement a plan for parks and parkways along Houston's bayous that was created by city planner Arthur C. Comey. Thousands of acres were acquired, and miles of parkways were built over a period of several decades. Floods, wars, an economic depression, and the automobile turned attention elsewhere, and for much of the 20th century Houstonians viewed their bayous as little more than drainage ditches. Buffalo Bayou, which was the focus of the 1912 plan — and which, incidentally, is the stream along whose banks Houston was born and Texas won its independence — became a civic embarrassment.

The Buffalo Bayou Partnership (BBP) began its efforts to restore the bayou a quarter century ago. Taking a cue from the 1912 initiative, the nonprofit organization commissioned a visionary plan by Thompson Design Group in 2002, "Buffalo Bayou and Beyond." It is an ambitious agenda for linear green space, compatible urban development, flood control, and multi-modal access along 10 miles of the bayou. It calls for an urban waterfront in downtown Houston, new linear parks in a revitalized East End-Fifth Ward, and a pastoral "West Sector" upstream from downtown. BBP then committed itself to excellence in implementing the plan. Two projects are now showing how that commitment is achieving transformative results.

Allen's Landing

Houston's Plymouth Rock, Allen's Landing is the spot where the city and its port were founded, but by the late 20th century, its small public park was little more than a parking lot, homeless encampment, and some derelict buildings. Using private and public funds, BBP first transformed the park and then, in a bold move, purchased a decaying, century-old industrial structure that abutted the park and was a piece of the port's history.

The Sunset Coffee Building was not an easy project to take on. Fundraising for a derelict building is hard work, especially for one known as the "UGB" (ugly green building) or the Love Street Light Circus, as it was called in its 1960s psychedelic heyday. The first floor of the small, three-story building had been inundated during major floods, and to complicate matters further, the building was a contributing structure in a National Historic District, making it subject to design review if federal funds were used to renovate it. Despite these challenges, BBP remained committed to design excellence and engaged Lake/Flato and BNIM to transform the structure into a focal point for downtown's urban waterfront.

"True to BBP's mission, the design goals focused on responsible stewardship of the site and structure," said Steve McDowell, FAIA, of BNIM. "The vegetated rooftop terrace provides a new vantage point from which to enjoy



RENDERING COURTESY THOMPSON DESIGN GROUP AND BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP.





the banks of the bayou at the urban edge.” The site’s history is captured by the simple building shell, which reads through new awnings that shade windows to save energy. The building’s simple form will be balanced with a new cistern that will supply irrigation water. Assisting in the effort to restore the site, the Texas Historical Commission focused on the two facades that had faced the port, allowing more interventions on the street frontages that were originally obscured by other buildings. An adjacent below-grade foundation slab will become a lower-level, community-oriented plaza accessed from the

An entry bridge will pass over the plaza to the building’s second floor and then cantilever out to the bayou ... This mix of activities and “eyes on the park” will also help activate the adjacent green space.

building’s first floor and the park. An entry bridge will pass over the plaza to the building’s second floor and then cantilever out to the bayou.

The building’s first floor will be a bike and watercraft hub funded with federal transportation dollars. The second floor will be BBP’s offices, but eventually could become a cafe or museum. The third floor and rooftop will be an event venue. The building will be managed by Houston First, the city’s convention and entertainment corporation. This mix of activities and “eyes on the park” also will help activate the adjacent green space.

The West Sector

In partnership with the City of Houston and Houston Parks Board, BBP has also begun a multi-million dollar waterfront connection from Allen’s

RENDERINGS COURTESY LAKEFIATO AND BINM. PHOTO COURTESY BINM. PHOTOS OF HOBBY CENTER BRIDGE AND SABINE PROMENADE COURTESY SWA GROUP AND BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP.

Landing upstream to Sesquicentennial Park (1998) and then along BBP's Sabine Promenade (2007) to 160 acres of parkland, all acquired with the 1912 park bonds. This 2.3-mile green space had been given over to flood control channelization work after Houston's catastrophic 1929 and 1935 floods, and only in recent decades have incremental improvements begun to realize the area's potential as parkland. With its pastoral character and adjacency to revitalizing neighborhoods, it is the "West Sector" of BBP's plan, now known as Buffalo Bayou Park.

The Buffalo Bayou Park project was born when the Kinder Foundation, which played a leadership role in the creation of Houston's Discovery Green, recognized BBP's success in implementing its plan in partnership with the City of Houston and Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) and pledged an unprecedented \$30 million to the West Sector. The grant was conditional on the project's completion in five years, public-private collaboration, adoption of an enforceable park master plan, and a funded maintenance plan. The conditions were welcomed by BBP and by its public partners. BBP also committed to raise an additional \$23 million of private funds. All told, BBP, the City of Houston, and HCFCD were poised to invest more than \$70 million in the newly-named Buffalo Bayou Park.

Presented with this unparalleled opportunity, BBP turned to SWA Group, which had already delivered several of its award-winning projects. The SWA team looked first to the bayou. "Buffalo Bayou is a living, breathing urban river, with waters that can rise 35 feet in 12 hours during a tropical downpour," said SWA principal Kevin Shanley. "It wants to continue to support a vibrant and indigenous ecology, while providing the open space desperately needed by a rapidly growing and increasingly dense urban population." As a consequence of these concerns, the resulting plan focuses on restoring the natural landscape that was lost when the bayou was channelized in the 1950s in response to the earlier floods. Wilderness areas will be created along two old bayou meanders, and a series of perennial gardens co-designed with Reed Hilderbrand are planned.

The project focuses on passive recreation and includes a riverside footpath plus additional trail connections to augment the city's new hike and bike trail. Two already-completed iconic pedestrian bridges join two others recently built by the city to improve connectivity across the bayou. Finally, 500 custom-designed trail lights will allow use of the park into the evening hours. They also will be the backbone for an extension of BBP's signature "Lunar Cycle Lighting," created by artist Stephen Korns and *L'Observatoire International*. This environmental artwork will turn blue lights on and off sequentially with the phases of the moon, with the progression beginning and ending at Allen's Landing.

Special destinations will activate key areas of the pastoral park — a dog park, a civic event venue, monumental art, and a large bat colony at the Waugh Bridge. Two new entry points at either end of the park will have visitor information, restrooms, bike and kayak rentals, a nature playground, and food service. One is Lost Lake, where an old pond is being restored and new gardens added. The other is the Water Works, home to the City's historic cistern, an underground concrete cathedral 1.5 times the size of a football field.

SWA teamed with Page (formerly PageSoutherlandPage) to design the project's two buildings and two major pavilions. Page principal Larry Speck, FAIA, drew on his experience integrating architecture into park landscapes. "The architecture occurs in the park in places where there is intensification of activity," said Speck. "The buildings needed to be strong enough to be landmarks, open enough to invite you in, and shady enough



Opening spread *The "Buffalo Bayou and Beyond" plan by Thompson Design Group shows the downtown sector of the park. BBP plans to engage Thompson Design Group for signature downtown waterfront spaces.*

Opposite page top to bottom *The renderings by Lake|Flato and BNIM show the proposed rehabilitation of the Sunset Coffee Building. It is shown prior to work beginning.*

Above *SWA completed the Hobby Center Bridge and the Sabine Promenade in 2007.*

Below *"Lunar Cycle Lighting" animates the Sabine Promenade.*



Above SWA's site plan shows the 2.3-mile long, 160-acre Buffalo Bayou Park.

Right Lost Lake has a pavilion designed by Page.

Opposite page top The park provides a green front lawn for downtown's skyline.

Bottom Aerial view of the pavilion and lawn at Water Works.





RENDERINGS COURTESY SWA GROUP.

to keep people comfortable. It was also important that they feel like a natural extension of the landscape design and that they be completely consistent with the larger framework of the park.”

Broad eaves shade the structures from the sun and grills at their outer perimeters mitigate the harsh contrast between bright sun and deep shade. Large board-formed concrete piers establish a civic presence for the modest structures, and their thermal mass will help cool the ambient temperatures within. There also is design consistency among the structures that creates a sense of continuity and calm in support of the overall goals for the park. This synergistic relationship between architecture and landscape and

Buffalo Bayou is a living, breathing urban river, with waters that can rise 35 feet in 12 hours during a tropical downpour.

between activity and nature will create a new destination for Houston that will require better connections to the vibrant city that surrounds it.

Two quasi-freeways, 1912 parkways on 1950s traffic engineering steroids, still cut the park off from surrounding neighborhoods. Recent city projects have improved access across Memorial Drive, but Allen Parkway remains a dangerous-to-cross barrier. BBP has proposed restoring Allen Parkway closer to the original 1912 plan by the 2015 completion of the park. It is working with city officials as public pressure mounts for safe passage into what will be one of Houston’s premier parks and a major milestone in implementing the “Buffalo Bayou and Beyond” plan.

Plans have true power, even if they take more than a century to be realized. With a historical symmetry any architect would love, Houstonians took note of what is happening on their bayous and went back to the polls in 2012 to approve a \$205 million proposal by the Houston Parks Board to resurrect the 1912 plan — this time, as a 150-mile system of trails and bayou greenways serving a city of over 600 square miles and more than two million people.

Guy Hagstette, FAIA, is project manager for the Buffalo Bayou Park project.





Block 21

by Canan Yetmen

Project W Austin Hotel + Residences with Austin City Limits Live at the Moody Theater, Austin

Clients Owner/Developer Stratus Properties; Hotel Operator: Starwood Hotel and Resorts

Architects Andersson-Wise Architects (Design Architect) and BOKA Powell (Architect of Record)

Design Team Arthur Andersson, FAIA; Chris Wise, AIA; Heather Plimmer; Christopher Sanders, AIA; Catherine Craig; Leland Ulmer; Laura McQuary; Robin Bagley Logan; Alex Lopez; Steve Dvorak; Chris Barnes, AIA; Dennis Gulseth, AIA; Rick Floyd; Thomas Stastny, AIA; Tonya Hudson; Vince Miller, AIA; Kyn Sledge, AIA; Tom Lekawski, AIA

Photographers Andrew Pogue, Art Gray, Jonathan Jackson, Thomas McConnell, and Tim Hursley

In 2005, the City of Austin issued a request for proposals to invite developer and architect teams to present ideas for designing what Mayor Will Wynn called “the most developable block in Austin.” Unencumbered by the zoning constraints of the Capitol View Corridors, the presence of any historic structures, or even an alleyway, the brownfield site, which was a parking lot located on prime downtown real estate, represented a major piece of the city’s ongoing growth puzzle. Development along the western end of Second Street had already brought Antoine Predock’s new city hall and the pair of CSC buildings (Page, formerly PageSoutherlandPage) that established the new southern entry of downtown. Block 21, as this prime parcel was known, would stitch these projects together, beginning major development on the north side of Second Street and pushing momentum toward the east, to the newly remodeled convention center and the centerpiece of Austin’s Great Streets program, the Second Street retail district. With so much promise and potential riding on a project, Mayor Wynn’s edict of “More is More” took hold, and teams were instructed to propose downtown’s largest mixed-use development — part retail, part residential, and part nonprofit — and make it sustainable, profitable, and (no small challenge) a statement about Austin’s future.

Local architects Andersson-Wise Architects (AWA), teamed with local developer Stratus Properties, proposed the winning scheme, which hinged on the development of the prominent corner at Second and Lavaca streets as an outdoor loggia, a porch, a place synonymous with Texas. The proposal, which originally included space for KLRU, Austin’s PBS station, as well as a low-rise residential tower, evolved when sights were set higher and higher as design and development converged. “With the importance of this site,

Previous page Block 21 includes the W Hotel and Residences, ACL, offices, and retail. The plaza at the corner of Second and Lavaca streets was a competition-winning feature of the design.

Below The mezzanine deck of ACL Live interacts with the street below.



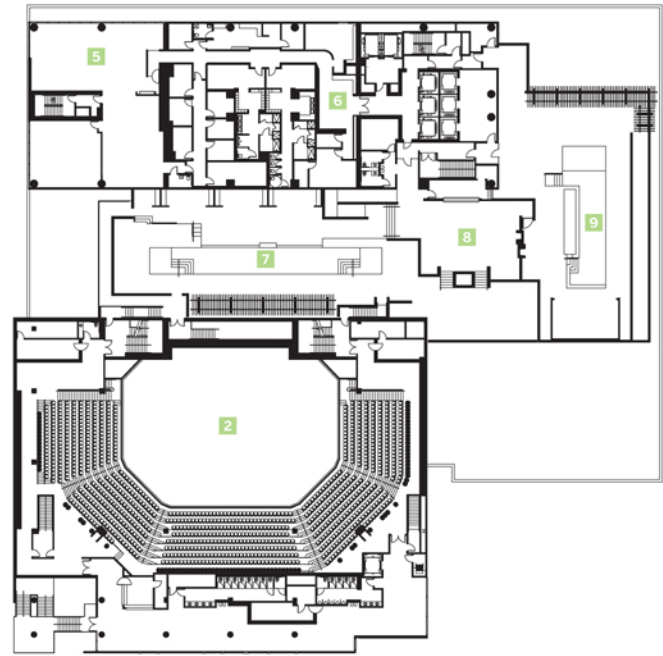
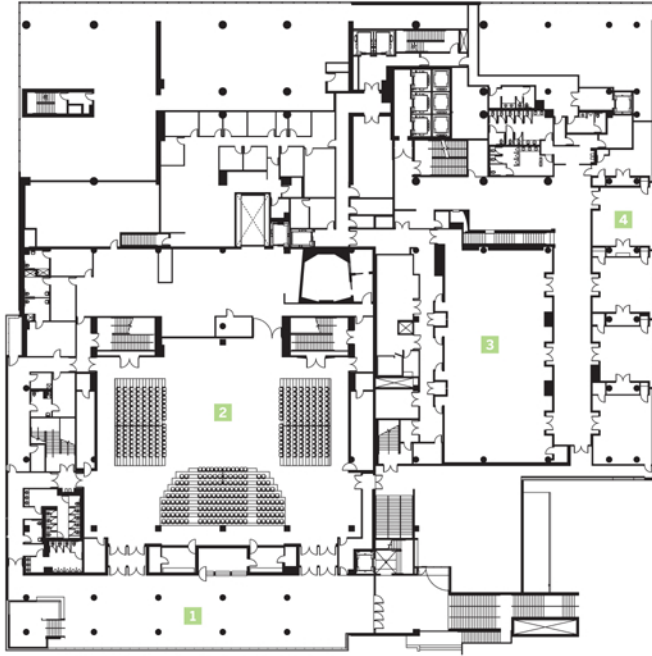
we were focused on an urban solution, one which animated the streetscape, connected to the scale of the adjacent context, and provided an appropriate backdrop to the seat of city government,” said Chris Wise, AIA. When Starwood Hotels and Resorts came on board with an agreement to include the W Hotel and Residences, everything changed. “The W redefined the project,” said Arthur Andersson, FAIA. The upscale, 250-room hotel

KLRU’s portion became ... a full-fledged concert venue with a capacity of 2,700, making Block 21 a bona fide downtown destination.

topped by a 159-unit luxury residential tower expanded the scope of the project. KLRU’s portion became, first, a new studio for the long-running Austin City Limits (ACL) television program, and then a full-fledged concert venue with a capacity of 2,700 (Austin is the Live Music Capital of the World, after all), making Block 21 a bona fide downtown destination. Reaching one million sf, the project would also be the biggest and most complex project that either AWA or Stratus Properties had undertaken, and as a result, the team brought in Dallas-based BOKA Powell as the architect of record.

“Everyone was excited about taking on the project’s challenges, including the City,” said Dennis Gulseth, project manager with BOKA Powell. “The design and development team adapted along with the City throughout the process, from permitting the underground parking garage to egress requirements for the performance hall, and everything in between.”

The design underwent several iterations but never strayed from Andersson’s fundamental vision for a project that was uniquely of Austin. He noted influences from the composition of Barnett Newman paintings, the fading blue-grey sky of Richard Diebenkorn’s works, and the cliff dwellings of



SECOND AND FOURTH FLOORS

- 1 VENUE PORCH
- 2 AUSTIN CITY LIMITS LIVE AT THE MOODY THEATER
- 3 GRAND BALLROOM
- 4 MEETING ROOM
- 5 GYM
- 6 SPA
- 7 HOTEL POOL DECK
- 8 POOL BAR
- 9 W RESIDENCES POOL DECK

Opposite page bottom
The acoustics for ACL required that the theater be designed as a box within a box.

Left *Vertical circulation for the music venue is open to the street, animating the boxy volume of the theater. Retail space is located at ground level at the south-east corner.*



Clockwise from top left *The residential tower rises like a mountain behind Austin's Antoine Predock-designed city hall. The loggia encourages pedestrian circulation and relates to the scale of adjacent buildings. The lobby of the W provides intimate spaces for meetings or socializing. Austin's Great Streets program encouraged wide promenades and outdoor spaces.*



Left Drawing inspiration from Mesa Verde and other cave dwellings, Andersson-Wise's design for the tower is an elegant addition to the expanding Austin skyline.

Mesa Verde, Colo. With the broad face of the tower facing south toward prevailing breezes, its cave-like balconies provide shade in the summer and sun in the winter. The tower's structural components are turned inward to create a 400-ft sheer curtain wall that at times seems to vanish into the sky. The building conducts a playful dialogue with city hall as well as the

With the broad face of the tower facing south toward prevailing breezes, its cave-like balconies provide shade in the summer and sun in the winter.

remaining context, mindful and reflective of its neighbors. "It's a polite conversation," said Andersson. The tower's broad face rises up behind city hall, a metaphorical mountain behind the seat of government (fortuitous, in Feng Shui). The notorious "stinger" — a protrusion that jabs a sharp point northward across Second Street from the city hall's northern face — is deflected by a massive concrete shear wall. The concrete at the base of the building forms a series of what Andersson calls "ruins" from which its components rise. No curb cuts interrupt the pedestrian flow along the hotel's main parking entry, a deliberate gesture to further encourage the foot traffic supported by Austin's Great Streets Program. From there, the

transition from outside to inside is a gentle play on the dappled shade of the riparian landscape along nearby Lady Bird Lake, which supplies the breezes that animate the outdoor spaces. The placing of the large ACL lobby terrace, stepped back just above the street, compounds the street interaction, allowing people to spill out from the building and interact with surrounding events and amenities.

These design gestures, supported by the synergy among the project's pieces, come together to create a place greater than the sum of its parts. The condominiums sold quickly, and surrounding retail development exploded. Block 21 stands at the heart of a vibrant downtown district, full of shops, restaurants, and residential towers. The front porch at the corner of Second and Lavaca streets even has a new full-time resident: an 8-ft statue of Willie Nelson that was installed in 2012. The legendary singer leans on his guitar, surveying the activity and marking the entrance to ACL Live. What could be more Austin than that?

Canan Yetmen writes about architecture. Her first novel, "The Roses Underneath," was released in January.



... with Willis Winters, FAIA

written by Gerald Moorhead, FAIA

photography by Nicole Mlakar

Earlier this year, Willis Winters, FAIA, was promoted to the position of director of the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department. Winters joined the department 20 years ago under director Paul Dyer and has made significant contributions to the department and to the citizens of Dallas in his positions as manager and then assistant director of planning, design, and construction.

Winters was born in Garland, Texas, where his father served 32 years as director of the Garland Park and Recreation Department — a forecast of his own future, perhaps. After high school in Dallas, he attended The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, graduating first in the class of 1980. He spent 11.5 years with Fisher and Spillman Architects/F&S Partners Architects and two years partnered with Craig Blackmon, FAIA, doing architectural photography and small architectural commissions. As the lean years of the early 1990s settled in, Winters responded on a whim to a job opening with the Dallas Park and Recreation Department. The rest is history, as someone once said.

The Dallas Park and Recreation Department is an expansive enterprise, encompassing 23,018 acres in 374 parks, 41 recreation centers, six golf courses, the Dallas Zoo, Fair Park, the Arboretum, 17 lakes, 115 miles of trails, and a vast array of programs and activities, all administered under an annual operating budget of over \$78 million. Winters works closely with Dallas Park and Recreation Board and its president, Max Wells, to establish the strategic vision and governing policies for the department. Winters credits his professional staff with the creative success of managing this behemoth. The total staff includes nearly 900 full-time and part-time employees and more than 5,000 volunteers. This crew is obviously much larger than all but a few of the firms with which we architects may be acquainted.

Every capital project undertaken is a collaborative effort among Winters' talented staff of architects, landscape architects, engineers, and project managers, and one or more private

partnership groups. Typically, he will take the lead in organizing the partnership, developing the vision for the project, procuring funding, and selecting the design consultant. Then, the staff team follows through with implementation under Winters' leadership and direction.

As the leader of this diversified recreation and maintenance public service mega-operation, Winters is in the position to have the greatest impact on the quality of life in Dallas of any public official. That civic life is in sure hands.

One of Winters' most important projects was the restoration of Fair Park, a 277-acre historic destination that attracted over 5.2 million visitors

Winters is in the position to have the greatest impact on the quality of life in Dallas of any public official.

last year through activities including the State Fair, athletic events in the Cotton Bowl, musicals, and many festivals. Work has proceeded over numerous phases, investing over \$260 million that includes architectural restoration, artwork conservation, and landscape reconstruction in addition to renovating and constructing new buildings for contemporary uses.

Dallas is the seventh largest city in the United States and has the fourth largest system of parkland. However, by the end of the 20th century, the city had fallen significantly behind national benchmarks for reinvesting in park systems. Winters co-led (with assistant director Eddie Hueston) and managed the preparation of a new comprehensive master plan (A Renaissance Plan, 2002, Carter & Burgess) to set strategic goals and, most important, construct a business model of public-private partnerships to finance implementation. "Fulfill the community mandates by providing all citizens with quality programs and access to safe and well-maintained park facilities throughout Dallas, while protecting and managing the Department's natural resources



and implementing the citizens' vision for quality recreational amenities," summarized the Plan.

Looking at a map of Dallas parks, one is struck by the even and dense distribution of parks across the entire city. The vast majority are neighborhood parks and recreation centers, providing the kind of open space, modest sports areas, and organized activity programs that are the essence of urbanity.

The Park Pavilions of Dallas, a program initiated and directed by Winters, brings attention to the importance of these neighborhood parks, engaging national design talent for pavilions.

The Park Pavilions of Dallas, a program initiated and directed by Winters, brings attention to the importance of these neighborhood parks, engaging national design talent for pavilions. Horticulture and reforestation have been added to the normal maintenance routines to further enhance the neighborhood parks. There are also a dozen historic parks in the city, built from 1925 to 1939, which contain marvelous stone structures built by WPA programs that are being rehabilitated in the Pavilions project.

Park improvements and maintenance must be paid for, of course, and the comprehensive plan proposes partnerships of various kinds. For example, Winters is in the very early stages of talks with partners to develop a program for land-sharing of schoolyards and play fields. These facilities would be used by the schools during the day and available to the community as parks during evenings and weekends, with shared maintenance and operating expenses.

This partnership could also involve the health-care sector, fitness organizations, and sports teams in promoting the Mayor's Youth Fitness Initiative, directed at obesity among Dallas youth. Other recent partners include Belo Corporation and Belo Foundation for the 1.7-acre downtown Belo Garden and the Downtown Parks Master Plan; the Dallas Zoological Society for projects at the Dallas Zoo; and the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Society for projects at the Dallas Arboretum.

The comprehensive plan was expanded in 2004 with a Downtown Master Plan (Carter & Burgess), which was updated this year (Hargreaves Associates). The most spectacular parks in the city are the result of this plan and several others are in the works. With 87 acres allocated within downtown, the plan will link a network of sites to define a pedestrian-friendly city center. The two-acre Main Street Garden inaugurated the plan. The most unconventional of the downtown parks is Klyde Warren Park (see pages 60 in this issue of *TA*), which bridges over the depressed Woodall Rodgers freeway on the north edge of the Arts District. Other downtown parks in the planning stages include Carpenter Plaza, Pacific Plaza, West End Plaza, and Farmers Market District – Harwood Park.

Even with all these wide-ranging projects to be conceived, organized, funded, and executed, Winters has still maintained his connections to architectural journalism. In addition serving as a contributing editor for *TA*, he has written or co-authored several books: "AIA Guide to Dallas Architecture"; "Fair Park"; "Great American Suburbs"; "Crafting Traditions: The Architecture of Mark Lemmon"; and "Dealey Plaza." He is currently working on "The Buildings of Texas, Vol. 2." We trust that the citizens of Dallas appreciate Winters for their quality of life, which he is working to improve every day.

Gerald Moorhead, FAIA, is a friend of Winters and an author of "The Buildings of Texas," volumes 1 and 2.

Previous spread As director of the City of Dallas Park and Recreation Department, Willis Winters, FAIA, leads a team of 900 employees and 5,000 volunteers.

Right The model for the College Park Pavilion by Snohetta is displayed in the city offices. Completed in 2013, the pavilion is part of the design excellence program for Dallas parks.





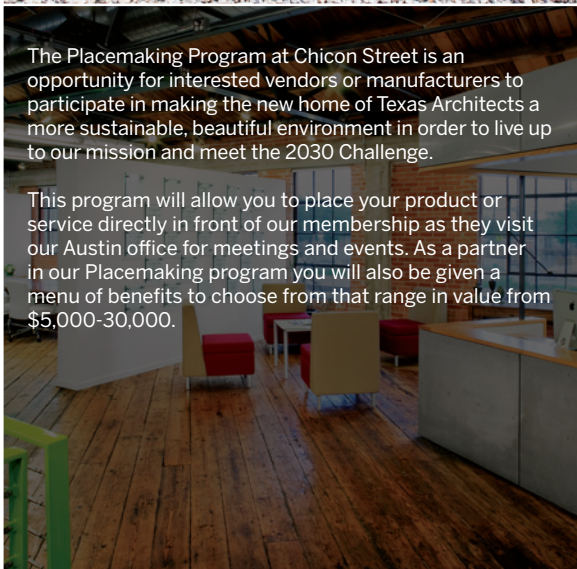
Clockwise from top
Winters' job requires extensive coordination with stakeholders involved in each project. He continues to work closely with Klyde Warren Park President Tara Green and Vice President Celia Barshop. Gail Terrell, the vice president of the Dallas Park and Recreation Board and Recreation Board represents District 8, where the Snohetta pavilion was just built. In between meetings, Winters can be found at his office in City Hall.



Right *Winters regularly presents planning initiatives at community meetings. The groundbreaking for construction at Carpenter's Plaza occurred on December 15; Winters is pictured with Mike Hellmann and Robert Dechard, vice chairman of the board of the A.H. Belo Corporation. Dechard is a strong advocate for the Downtown Parks Master Plan.*



Placemaking at 500 Chicon



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- Lighting
- Furniture
- Gates
- Sunshades
- Green Power

Interior

- Window Shades
- Acoustic Control
- Lighting/Controls
- Energy Star Appliances
- HVAC Zoning

Edgeland House, Austin

Contractor Bercy Chen Studio LP (Design-Build)

Consultants **STRUCTURAL:** MJ Structures; **SOIL ENGINEERING, PLANT SELECTION, SITE PRARIE RESTORATION:** Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center; **CIVIL:** Waterstreet Engineering; **LIGHTS:** Agi Miagi

Resources **CONCRETE FOUNDATIONS AND RETAINING WALLS:** RCS Concrete Professionals; **STEEL:** Estructuras Hidalgo; **MASTERBED STAIRCASE:** Steelhouse (Designed by Agustina Rodriguez); **GREEN ROOF SYSTEM (GEOWEB SYSTEM):** Alcoa Geosystems (Geo Solutions); **FINISHES:** H&H Tile & Plaster (Swimming Pool); **DINING CHAIRS:** RAD (Ryan Anderson Design); **CABINETS:** IKEA; **PLUMBING:** Chabert Plumbing; **HEATING, VENTILATING, AND AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC):** Ehrlich Mechanical; **ELECTRICAL:** Austin Eiectical Contractors

W Austin Hotel + Residences with Austin City Limits Live at the Moody Theater, Austin

Contractor Austin Commercial, LP

Consultants **DESIGN ARCHITECT:** Andersson-Wise Architects; **ARCHITECT OF RECORD:** BOKA Powell; **INTERIOR DESIGN (HOTEL/ CONDOMINIUMS):** Andersson-Wise Architects with Heather Plimmer; **INTERIOR DESIGN (MUSIC VENUE):** Rios Clementi Hale Studios with Heather Plimmer; **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN:** Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems; **COMMISSIONING:** ACR Engineering; **ENERGY RENEWABLES:** Meridian Energy Systems; **DAYLIGHTING/ENERGY MODELING:** Clanton & Associates, Enermodal; **CIVIL ENGINEER:** Bury+Partners; **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Talley Associates; **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Thornton Tomasetti; **MEP ENGINEER:** JJA; **THEATRE:** Theatre Consultants Collaborative; **LIGHTING:** Horton Lees Brogden Lighting Design; **FOOD SERVICE AND LAUNDRY:** William Caruso & Associates; **TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND AUDIO VISUAL:** IP Design Group; **SECURITY AND BUILDING CONTROLS:** Securitas Systems; **CODE:** Schirmer Engineering; **CURTAIN WALL:** CDC; **ELEVATOR:** Persohn/Hahn Associates; **ACOUSTICAL – BUILDING:** PMK; **PARKING PLANNING:** Parking Planners; **TRAFFIC:** HDR|WHM Transportation Engineering; **GEOTECHNICAL SERVICES:** Henley Johnston & Associates; **ENVIRONMENTAL SITE SERVICES:** Terracon; **WIND TUNNEL TESTING:** Rowan Williams Davies & Irwin (RWDI) Consulting Engineers & Scientists; **MUSIC VENUE – HOUSE SOUND:** Steven Durr Designs; **MUSIC VENUE – BROADCASTING TECHNOLOGY:** Beck Associates; **PERMIT EXPEDITOR:** Austin Permit Service; **MODEL:** The Model Shop; **3D & ANIMATION:** Alpha Vision Renderings and Animations; **GRAPHICS:** Jankedesign; **EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE/WINDOW WASHING:** Excalibur SwingStage

Resources **CONCRETE:** APAC Texas; **REBAR:** Capitol City Steel; **FORMWORK:** Ceco; **CONCRETE PLACING:** Clark Concrete; **CONCRETE ACCESSORIES:** Studio K; **POST TENSION SUPPLIER:** Southwest Post Tension; **MASONRY:** P&S Masonry; **DECORATIVE METALS:** A Zahner Company, Austin Outdoor Studios; **STRUCTURAL STEEL:** Ennis; **MISCELLANEOUS STEEL:** Miscellaneous Steel Industries; **MISCELLANEOUS METALS:** Perry & Perry; **MILLWORK:** AMI Hospitality, Buda Woodworks; **KITCHEN MILLWORK:** Bulthaup; **CLOSET MILLWORK:** California Closets; **MILLWORK SUPPLY:** Chadwick Designs, Creative Mouldings; **WATERPROOFING:** Chamberlin, SW Sealants; **GLASS HANDRAILS:** Custom Components; **ROOFING:** Fifth Wall Roofing; **FIREPROOFING:** LCR Contractors; **CEMENT COMPOSITE FACADE:** RM Rogers; **INTERIOR GLASS:** Austin Glass & Mirror; **DOORS, FRAMES & HARDWARE:** Hull Supply; **SPECIAL DOORS:** Miner Central, ED Flume, Won-Door, Morales & Associates; **ACCESS FLOORING:** Prestige Interiors; **CURTAIN WALL:** Win-Con Enterprises; **RESIN FLOORING:** Advanced Concrete Protection; **TILE & STONE:** Alamo Tile & Stone, Lyn-Tile; **PAINT:** Alpha Painting, Schnurr; **CARPET:** Austin Fine Floors; **DRYWALL:** Baker Drywall; **FLOORING:** Rockford; **PLASTER:** Southwest Progressive; **WOOD FLOORING:** Woodwright; **MISCELLANEOUS SPECIALTIES:** Chatham Worth Specialties, DEA Specialties; **SIGNAGE:** ION Art; **KITCHEN EQUIPMENT:** Alliance Food Equipment; **WINDOW WASHING EQUIPMENT:** Excaliber; **RESIDENTIAL APPLIANCES:** Meile; **FENCING:** Metalink Corporation; **PARKING EQUIPMENT:** Mitchell

Time & Parking; **DOCK EQUIPMENT:** Southern Dock Products; **WINDOW TREATMENTS:** Capitol Blinds; **TRASH/LINEN CHUTE:** American Chute; **FIREPLACES:** Earthcore Industries; **POOLS AND EQUIPMENT:** Liquid Assets; **THEATER SEATING:** Mobiliario; **VENUE VIBRATION ISOLATION:** Moore & Assoc; **THEATER CURTAINS:** Texas Scenic Co.; **ELEVATORS:** Kone; **FIRE PROTECTION:** Northstar Fire Protection; **MECHANICAL:** Dynamic Systems; **PERFORMANCE DIMMING:** Barbizon Light of the Rockies; **ELECTRICAL:** Walker Engineering; **AUDIO VISUAL:** Service Tech; **SECURITY:** Convergint; **LANDSCAPING:** Clean Scapes; **LANDSCAPING PAVERS:** Kiwi Company; **UTILITIES:** Commercial Consolidated; **SITE UTILITIES:** Mastec; **PAVING:** Contractors Ashphalt; **PAVEMENT MARKING:** Preventative Maintenance

Klyde Warren Park, Dallas

Contractor McCarthy Building Companies, Archer Western Contractors

Consultants **LEAD DESIGNER AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** The Office of James Burnett; **ENGINEER OF RECORD:** Jacobs Engineering; **ARCHITECT (PAVILION/RESTAURANT) AND ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN:** Thomas Hifer & Partners; **ARCHITECT (CHILDREN'S RESTROOM/SITE STRUCTURES):** Endres Studio Architects Engineers; **INTERIOR ARCHITECT (RESTAURANT):** The Johnson Studio; **PARK CONSULTANT:** Biederman Redevelopment Ventures; **PROGRAM MANAGER:** Bjerke Management Solutions; **LIGHTING:** Focus Lighting Design; **WATER FEATURE DESIGN:** Fluidity Design Consultants; **ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGNER OF RECORD:** Focus EGD; **IRRIGATION DESIGN:** Sweeney Associates; **ENGINEER (CIVIL, BRIDGE STRUCTURAL, SITE ELECTRICAL):** Jacobs Engineering; **ENGINEER (UTILITIES):** Dal-Tech Engineering; **ENGINEER (SITE STRUCTURAL):** Endres Studio Architects Engineers; **LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR:** ValleyCrest Landscape Development; **WATER FEATURE CONTRACTOR:** Greenscape Pump Services

Resources **PRECAST CONCRETE BOX BEAM FABRICATORS:** Texas Prestressed Concrete And Speed Fab-Crete; **CONCRETE UNIT PAVING/PRECAST CONCRETE:** Wausau Tile; **GRANITE PAVING AND BOULDERS:** Cold Springs Granite; **TREE GRATES:** Hendricks Architectural Products/Big D Metalworks; **SAFETY SURFACE:** Pebbleflex; **ARTIFICIAL TURF:** Forever Lawn; **BOLLARDS:** Cal-Pipe Security Bollards; **EXTERIOR LIGHTING:** Hess, Erco, Bega, Io Lighting, Celadon Group, Bk Lighting, Lumiere, We-Ef, Designplan, Color Kinetics, Permlight, Lithonia, Meteor; **PLAY EQUIPMENT:** Goric Marketing Group, Berliner Seilfabrik; **BICYCLE RACKS:** Forms + Surfaces; **LITTER RECEPTACLES:** Landscape Forms; **BENCHES:** Forms + Surfaces, Landscape Forms; **DRINKING FOUNTAINS:** Most Dependable Fountains; **FENCING:** Ameristar; **IRRIGATION:** Hunter Industries; **CUSTOM PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS:** Solartonic; **ELECTRICAL OUTLET:** Pedoc Power; **SECURITY CAMERAS:** Bearcom; **EMERGENCY CALL STATIONS:** Code Blue; **LIGHTWEIGHT SOILS AND FILL:** Soil Building Systems; **TREES:** Select Trees, Cc Tree Farm; **DESIGN SOFTWARE:** Autocad, Vectorworks

Paisano Green Community, El Paso

Consultants **ARCHITECT:** WORKSHOP8; **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Gebau; **MEP ENGINEERS:** Priest Engineering; **CIVIL ENGINEER:** JVA; **LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Clanton & Associates; **SOILS ENGINEER:** Raba-Kistber Consultants (SW); **SURVEY ENGINEER:** Frank X. Spencer; **SPECIFICATIONS:** Delet; **ENERGY CONSULTANT:** Sustainably Built

Resources **CONCRETE:** Jobe Materials (Mimbella Contractors); **MASONRY:** ACME Brick Company; **METAL:** Marquez Wrought Iron; **WOODS, PLASTICS, COMPOSITE:** Darrel Julian Construction; **ROOFING THERMAL & MOISTURE PROTECTION:** BASF Sonoshield HLM 5000 (BAM Roofing); **THERMAL & MOISTURE PROTECTION:** GAF Materials Corporation - MSDS #2060, Dupont Tyvek Home Wrap, Fortifier Building Systems Group, DOW Styrofoam WEATHER-MATE Plus, Grace Ice & Water Shield, US Metals Flat Lock Metal Roofing, GAF EverGuard TPO 60; **OPENINGS:** Pella Fiberglass Windows, ROPE Resilient Base, Masonite Front Doors (Frontier Door, El Paso); **PLASTER FINISHES:** Sto Powerflex Silco (Kenyon

Plastering); **OTHER WALL FINISHES:** American Gypsum - Type X and Standard; **TILE:** TAKLA Porcelain Tiles (Casey Carpet of Las Cruces); **FLOORING:** FORBO Resilient Flooring; **PAINT:** Sherwin Williams Paints and Protective Coatings (Miguel Campos); **SPECIALTIES:** SPEC Signs (Jaye Andres), Bobrick Bath Accessories, Ebassy Fire-FX Fire Cabinets, Amerex Fire Extinguishers, Lanz Cabinets; **EQUIPMENT:** ThyseenKrup Elevators, BROAN HRV, LG Mini Split Heat Pumps (Smith and Sons); **SPECIAL CONSTRUCTION:** Flexible LIFELINE Systems; **FIRE SUPPRESSION:** TNT Tech LLC; **PLUMBING:** Praxis Industries (Ferguson), GE GeoSpring Hybrid Water Heater; **ELECTRICAL POWER GENERATION:** XZERES Wind Turbines, Sanyo PV Panels

Myriad Botanical Gardens, Oklahoma City, OK

Contractors Flintco and Lippert Brothers

Consultants **PRIME CONSULTANT AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** The Office of James Burnett; **ARCHITECT:** Gensler; **FOUNTAIN DESIGNER:** Fluidity Design Consultants; **LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Fisher Marantz Stone Partners; **AQUATIC DESIGNER:** Pacific Aquascape; **ASSOCIATE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Murase Associates; **CIVIL ENGINEER:** Cardinal Engineering; **ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:** Alvine Engineering; **STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Thornton Tomasetti; **ARCHITECT OF RECORD:** Frankfurt Short Bruza Associates; **SITE FEATURE ARCHITECT:** EndresWare Architects Engineers; **CONSULTING ARBORIST:** Robert Birchell & Associates; **IRRIGATION DESIGNER:** Sweeney Associates; **CONSULTING HORTICULTURIST:** Mary Irish Horticulture Consulting, Dr. Michael Schnelle; **ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGNER:** Dyal and Partners

Building Resources **CEMENTITIOUS CLADDING PANELS:** SwissPearl; **DOORS:** Dawson Doors; **WOODS, PLASTICS, COMPOSITE - BRAZILIAN IPE:** Advantage Trim and Lumber; **THERMAL & MOISTURE PROTECTION:** Hydrotech; **ROOFING:** Sika Sarnafil; **OPENINGS - GLASS CURTAIN WALL:** Cricursa (McCoy Associates); **TILE FLOORING:** Dal-Tile; **TERRAZZO FLOORING:** Preservation & Protection Systems; **SPECIALTIES - ACOUSTICAL SYSTEMS:** Eurospan; **SPECIALTIES - ACOUSTICAL SYSTEMS:** Snaptex; **EQUIPMENT - VERISMO ESPRESSO CAPPUCINO MACHINE:** Verismo; **COFFEE GRINDER:** Fetco Corp; **PANNI GRILL:** Equipex; **UNDER BAR ICE MAKER:** Hoshizaki; **WATER FILTER:** Everpure; **WALL MOUNTED SHELVING:** Metro; **MOP SINK:** Advance Tabco; **WALK IN COOLER/FREEZER:** Thermo-Kool; **RANGE/OVEN:** Vulcan Hart; **CHEESE-MELTER:** Wolf Range; **CONVECTION OVEN:** Blodgett Oven; **EXHAUST HOOD:** Captive-Aire; **ICE CREAM DIPPING CABINET:** Delfield; **MICROWAVE OVEN:** Panasonic; **ELECTRICAL CONVEYOR TOASTER:** Star Mfg; **DISHWASHER:** Champion; **REACH IN REFRIGERATOR:** Traulsen; **STEEL FURNITURE:** C+P Moebelsysteme; **FIRE SUPPRESSION:** Anslu Fire; **PLUMBING:** Zurn Plumbing Products Group; **PLUMBING - WASH BASIN:** OMVivo; **BATHROOM FAUCETS:** Vola; **TOILETS/ URINAL:** Duravit; **LED LIGHTING DOWNLIGHTS:** Lucifer, Philips CK; **DECORATIVE PENDANT:** Artek; **RECESSED COMPACT FLUORESCENT DOWNLIGHT:** Kurt Versen; **INGRADE RECESSED UPLIGHT:** Bega

Landscape Resources **CONCRETE UNIT PAVER/TACTILE PAVERS:** Stepstone; **UNIT PAVERS:** Yellow Mountain Stoneworks; **TREEGRATE:** Ironsmith; **STEEL LANDSCAPE EDGING:** Permaloc Cleanline; **ARTIFICIAL PLAYGROUND TURF/ARTIFICIAL DOGPARK TURF:** K9 Grass and Playground Grass Byforever Lawn; **MEINDERS GARDEN IPE BRIDGES:** Yonah Mountain Timber Frames; **WATER FEATURE SEALANT:** Gaco Western; **ORNAMENTAL FENCING:** Ameristar; **PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** Playworld Systems; **CUSTOM PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT:** Urban Art Projects; **INTEGRATED HANDRAIL LIGHTING SYSTEM:** Luxerail By Io Lighting; **DOG WASTE RECEPTACLE:** Mm Cite; **TRASH RECEPTALES:** Creative Pipe; **CONCRETE PLANTERS:** Quikrete Products; **UMBRELLAS:** Tropitone; **BIKE RACKS:** Creative Pipe; **SECURITY BOLLARDS:** Cal Pipe Security Bollards; **HYDROFOG CHILDRENS' PLAYGROUND MISTERS:** Hydrofog; **LIGHTING:** Io Systems; **CAMERAS:** Axis Communications; **TREE ANCHORS:** Platipus Tree Anchors; **DESIGN SOFTWARE:** Autocad, Vectorworks ■

Myriad Botanical Gardens

by Ben Koush

Downtown Oklahoma City's Myriad Botanical Gardens received a huge face-lift from The Office of James Burnett in collaboration with David Epstein, AIA, of Gensler's Austin office. The reinvigorated park's beautiful pavilions and diversity of gardens are attracting people from all over the city.

In 2010, Project 180 was launched by Oklahoma City to refurbish public areas of downtown. The project's master plan was designed by The Office of James Burnett, and its name refers to the number of acres to be improved. Its approximately \$175 million budget was funded by a variety of sources, chiefly tax increment financing, which was provided in large part by the construction of the new 50-story Devon Energy Tower (2012), a shiny new bauble designed by Pickard Chilton. While much of the money went to new streetscapes, a large chunk — about \$40 million — was allocated for Myriad Botanical Gardens, a then derelict, 17-acre park characterized by a tube-like Crystal Bridge and a large, sunken pond originally designed by Conklin & Rossant in the 1960s.

Burnett's office sought to correct as many of the design "mistakes" as possible, while working elements that could not be removed (the Crystal Bridge) and those that were desirable (*allées* of mature trees), into a new, coherent project. The pond was reduced in size, and its northern, short end was replaced with a 28,000-sf event lawn. The slope down to the pond was eased with the installation of tiered and switchback ramps and bigger and broader stairs. The park was further

divided into several distinct areas, each with its own type of activities.

After developing the master plan, The Office of James Burnett invited Gensler to design several new park pavilions and redesign the entry area to the Crystal Bridge. Gensler's team, headed by David Epstein, AIA, designed a diaphanous bandstand made of bent steel tubes that anchors one end of the event lawn. Epstein also

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designed a circular, open-air pavilion for the southwest quadrant of the park, about which a smaller activity lawn, a water park that mimics the atmospheric effects of a thunderstorm, and a children's garden pivot. A much larger, glass-enclosed circular pavilion on the park's eastern edge contains a full-service restaurant and faces a plaza that doubles as a skating rink in the winter. The architectural language is a crisp version of neo-modern with a lot of very precisely fitted-together white-colored cement board, sheet metal, and plaster panels accented by pipe columns.

This thoroughly polished project is part of a larger comprehensive and sensible improvement plan that extends throughout Oklahoma City's downtown — a plan that even goes so far as to reroute a section of interstate freeway away from this core area. Myriad Botanical Gardens' redesign represents a prevailing trend, not only in landscape architecture, but in image-crafting for "urban" areas in contemporary cities. Nowadays, the idea is not to "create order out of the desperate confusion of our time," as Mies van der Rohe once said of his work, but rather to create interest out of the desperate monotony of our time — to harness the authentic, gritty "chaos" of older downtown areas, smooth it over a bit, and neatly package it for mass consumption. ■ ■

Ben Koush is a Houston-based writer and architect.



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