

---

# 2015 RUDY BRUNER AWARD



**Submission for  
WASHINGTON PARK RESTORATION  
CINCINNATI, OHIO**

**Cincinnati Center City Development Corp. (3CDC)**



---

# 2015 RUDY BRUNER AWARD PROJECT DATA



# PROJECT DATA

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Project Name \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Owner \_\_\_\_\_

Project Use(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Project Size \_\_\_\_\_ Total Development Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Operating Budget (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

Date Initiated \_\_\_\_\_ Percent Completed by December 1, 2014 \_\_\_\_\_

Project Completion Date (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_ Project Website (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

Attach, if you wish, a list of relevant project dates \_\_\_\_\_

## Application submitted by:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website (if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

## Perspective Sheets:

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Public Agencies \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Designer \_\_\_\_\_

Developer \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Consultant \_\_\_\_\_

Community Group \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate how you learned of the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*. (Check all that apply).

- |                |                      |                                     |                        |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Direct Mailing | Direct Email         | Previous Selection Committee member | Other (please specify) |
| Online Notice  | Previous RBA entrant | Professional Organization           | _____                  |
|                | Social Media         | Bruner/Loeb Forum                   |                        |

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, and to post on the Bruner Foundation websites, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ 

Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

**2015**  
**RUDY BRUNER AWARD**  
**PROJECT**  
**AT-A-GLANCE**



# PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

---

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet, the Project Data sheet, and the representative photo will be sent to the Committee in advance as the *Project Overview*.

Project Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

1. Give a brief overview of the project. Approximately 500 words.

2. Why does the project merit the *Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence*? (You may wish to consider such factors as: effect on the urban environment; innovative or unique approaches to any aspect of project development; new and creative approaches to urban issues; design quality.) Approximately 500 words.

---

# 2015 RUDY BRUNER AWARD PROJECT DESCRIPTION



# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

---

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

1. Describe the underlying values and goals of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project? Approximately 500 words.

2. Briefly describe the project's urban context. How has the project impacted the local community? Who does the project serve? How many people are served by the project? Approximately 500 words.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONT'D)

---

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate. Approximately 400 words.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable. Approximately 400 words.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings? Approximately 400 words.

---

**2015**  
**RUDY BRUNER AWARD**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**REPRESENTATIVE**  
**PERSPECTIVE**



# COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

Name	Daniel A. Pfau	Title	Chairman of the Advisory Board
Organization	The Daniel and Susan Pfau Foundation	Telephone	(513) 241-2880
Address	200 West Fourth Street	City/State/ZIP	Cincinnati, OH 45202
Fax ( )		E-mail	Mattheish@gcfdn.org

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature		Date	12/4/2014
-----------	---	------	-----------

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project? What role did you play? Approximately 400 words.

The Daniel and Susan Pfau Foundation's primary focus is on the education, health, cultural experience and social welfare of disabled and disadvantaged children, adolescents, young adults, and their families. The Foundation is also has a vested interest in the support of arts and cultural organizations as well as recreation areas. So, when the Foundation was approached by the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) in 2013 to provide financial support for the children's playground in Washington Park, it seemed like a natural fit.

After the Park's first summer of operation, 3CDC realized there was a need for additional help in the children's playground area. The socioeconomic differences of children in the playground had presented problems with respect to turn-taking, sharing, and other play activities. In addition, many young children from the neighborhood had been coming to the Park without parents, technically breaking the Park rule that children must be supervised at all times. Rather than simply throwing these children out of the playground for breaking the rules, 3CDC recognized that a more positive approach to addressing the problems would be to allow these children to stay in the safe environment of the Park's playground, and help them learn how to do things like wait in line, share, and be respectful of others. That's where the Foundation came in.

In its role, the Foundation provided funding to create a support staff, known as Play Ambassadors, which monitors activity in the children's playground. The members of this staff have a number of key responsibilities – ensuring the playground area remains clean and safe for visitors, enforcing rules and regulations, administering first aid care (when necessary), and responding to patrons' questions and concerns. In addition, the Play Ambassadors teach children important lessons, like waiting in line, taking turns on playground equipment, sharing, and being respectful of others.

2. From the community's point of view, what were the major issues concerning this project? Approximately 400 words.

The most pressing issues related to this project were concerns about the physical, economic and social conditions in the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood in which the Park resides.

For decades, Washington Park steadily devolved into a neglected urban space in the heart of OTR that had become a haven for crime, instead of an inclusive community park for children, families and neighborhood residents to enjoy.

From an aesthetic perspective, the Park was littered with broken glass and trash, and its key features, such as the historic bandstand, were falling into disrepair. Park signs were covered in graffiti and the grounds were unkempt.

The lack of safety resulting from the criminal element that had overtaken the Park kept visitors away and fueled negative perceptions of the area. In addition, the neighborhood's declining population and rising unemployment discouraged commercial and residential development in the area, all of which combined to keep the neighborhood from growing and thriving, and preventing it from reaching the vast potential that so many in the community knew it had.

## COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Has this project made the community a better place to live or work? If so, how? Approximately 400 words.

Throughout the Washington Park revitalization process, the project's key stakeholders came to understand the importance of assessing – and then reassessing – the needs of the surrounding community. After the Park reopened to the public in July 2012, residents voiced the desire for increased staffing – specifically within the children's area – so as to ensure the space remained safe and secure for all visiting families. One of the ways these needs were addressed was through the addition of Play Ambassadors in an effort to continually improve patrons' experiences during their time in Washington Park.

In addition to the Play Ambassadors, 3CDC, who manages the Park along with the Cincinnati Park Board, brought ALL customer service representatives in-house, including cleaning, safety, play, and event staff. Of those new hires, 55% live within a 3-mile radius of the Park, a fact that provides further evidence of a decreasing disparity among underprivileged residents, as more jobs have been – and continue to be – added to the community. This added benefit also extends past the new jobs in the Park, as additional jobs have become available through new businesses in the neighborhood, such as kitchen jobs in nearby restaurants, sales associates in local shops and boutiques, and maintenance staff at residential properties.

Along with the increase in available jobs nearby, those who live in the area have experienced a number of additional benefits. Residents now have a beautiful greenspace in the heart of their community that they can now fully utilize. In addition, the Park's daily programming provides families with a variety of fun, free activities to enjoy together. And, the increased level of activity at the revitalized Park has led to a steady drop in crime, making the area a much safer place to live.

4. Would you change anything about this project or the development process you went through? Approximately 400 words.

In joining the project after it was already completed, the Foundation was not involved in the development process itself. However, based on the positive impact the Park's revitalization has had on the community, the Foundation would not change a thing about the initial project.

In addition, the Foundation is pleased that it was able to be involved in enhancing the completed Park with its financial contribution. The fact that the key stakeholders in the project are still dedicated to listening to, and addressing, the community's needs is a sign that the revitalized Park will continue to be a success.

---

**2015**  
**RUDY BRUNER AWARD**  
**PUBLIC AGENCY**  
**PERSPECTIVE**




Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by staff representative(s) of public agency(ies) who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

Name	Steven Schuckman	Title	Superintendent of Planning & Design
Organization	Cincinnati Park Board	Telephone	(513) 475-9600
Address	950 Eden Park Drive	City/State/ZIP	Cincinnati, OH 45202
Fax	(513) 475-0318	E-mail	steven.schuckman@cincinnati-oh.gov

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature		Date	12/3/2014
-----------	---	------	-----------

1. What role did your agency play in the development of this project? Describe any requirements made of this project by your agency (e.g., zoning, public participation, public benefits, impact statements). Approximately 400 words.

Washington Park is a public park under the control and management of the Cincinnati Park Board. The Park Board partnered with the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) to create a master plan for the Park starting in 2006. The Park Board put together the planning program, including appointing a steering committee of community representatives and stakeholders, hiring a landscape architecture/planning firm to develop a master plan, developing the goals and objectives for the plan, and then running the planning process.

The Park Board took the lead in hosting numerous public meetings, gathering public input, meeting with stakeholders and then directing the preparation of the plan. Once the plan was completed, the Board again took the lead in taking it through the approval processes, including presenting to and working with the City Planning Commission, City Council, and the Historic Conservation Board.

The Park Board also then worked closely with 3CDC and the City administration on an implementation and funding plan, including the development of a series of partnership agreements for project funding, project design and construction, and a series of agreements to fund park operations once the project would be completed. Finally, the Park Board partnered with 3CDC all through the construction process, which took approximately two years.

2. How was this project intended to benefit your city? What trade-offs and compromises were required to implement the project? How did your agency participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

The renovation and expansion of Washington Park was intended to provide a host of benefits to the community and to the city. First, it was seen as an opportunity to return an historic park that had fallen into disrepair to its former glory, done in a way that respected its past while also improving its present and future. The project was intended to provide a combination of upgraded and state-of-the-art park facilities and features for the neighborhood's long-time and new residents. It was also intended to meet the evolving needs of the community, which was in the midst of a renaissance itself, and to act as a catalyst for continued development in the surrounding neighborhood by serving as a new focal point. Finally, the Park was meant to become a highly utilized gathering place and celebratory space for the neighborhood and for the city, hosting a new range of events and programs.

The project's biggest compromise involved determining the proper approach for parking facilities at the Park. While everyone involved agreed that the Park's expansion by two acres was critical, given the shortage of greenspace in the neighborhood, the Park plan did not originally call for an underground garage. As such, implementing the new 450-space garage beneath the Park expansion area was the biggest single change in the Park plan. However, when the idea emerged to build an underground garage on the site – rather than at an adjacent free-standing site – the Park Board embraced the idea and integrated it into the Park's master plan. The impact on the project included excavating a portion of the land to accommodate a below-grade, 450-space garage, as well as incorporating two garage ramps and three portals, containing the stairs and elevators to the garage, into the original Park plan. Ultimately, adding the garage and these garage elements actually strengthened the plan, without compromising its integrity.

3. Describe the project's impact on your city. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

The project has had an extraordinary impact on the city since the renovated Park reopened to the public in July 2012. In fact, the huge crowds of Park visitors and the extensive media coverage have exceeded everyone's expectations. A wide range of events and programs, including movies in the Park, performances by the symphony and ballet, and weekly jazz, bluegrass and R&B concerts, have drawn large crowds. Additionally, there have been story hours for children, performances by students from the School for Creative and Performing Arts, which is across the street from the Park, programs for dogs and their owners at the dog park, urban flea markets and much more.

Although regular programming has played a vital role in the Park's success since its renovation, many of the Park's unique features have also contributed to the growing number of visitors. The Park's huge water feature, unique playground, and dog park have all brought crowds of people into the Park on a regular basis. Casual observation, interviews and media coverage all show that the Park's visitors are extremely diverse. Patrons include new and old neighborhood residents, people from out of town, people from other city neighborhoods, and people from suburbs who would never have dreamed of coming to Washington Park prior to its redevelopment.

The project has established a new sense of identity for the Park and the OTR neighborhood as a whole. According to restaurant, bar and shop owners in the neighborhood, there has been an influx of new customers in the area, thanks in large part to the revitalized Park. And, with increases in apartment rentals, condo sales and new commercial tenants in the historic buildings around and near the Park, it is evident that the restoration and expansion of the Park has played a significant role in bringing these individuals and businesses to the neighborhood. It is not a stretch to say that the project has given new life to Over-the-Rhine and the city, and makes residents look at themselves in a far more positive light, as the inner city is reborn.

4. Did this project result in new models of public/private partnerships? Are there aspects of this project that would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities? Approximately 400 words.

The Washington Park renovation project was ultimately the result of a significant partnership between the Cincinnati Park Board and 3CDC, as well as the City of Cincinnati. It was this partnership that first developed the concept of renovating and expanding the Park, creating a consensus plan we could all support. It was also this partnership that saw it through—from forging a funding and partnership agreement to designing and building the renovated Park. Today, the same partnership continues to be mutually beneficial, as the Park Board and 3CDC operate the Park together.

This unique partnership can serve as a successful example of the public and private sectors working together toward a common goal for other cities and parks and recreation systems. Although each organization has its own goals, many of those goals are overlapping, creating a symbiotic relationship between the two groups. Part of 3CDC's philosophy in revitalizing OTR hinges on the ability to create and manage great civic spaces, the success of which the organization believes spreads to the surrounding area. The Park Board's goals are less broad, focusing on creating and sustaining public greenspaces for the enjoyment and enrichment of the citizens of Cincinnati.

With each group's goals in mind, the Park Board and 3CDC have worked together to operate the Park and to fund its operation and maintenance since the renovation was finished in July 2012. The underground garage is operated and maintained by 3CDC and garage revenue is used to run the garage, retire debt and pay for capital repairs and replacement. Additionally, Park programming—all of which is provided for free—and sponsorships are 3CDC's responsibility. Park staff handles facility maintenance, horticulture and basic Park stewardship. The Park itself is funded in part by the City of Cincinnati and in part by 3CDC and both Park staff and 3CDC staff work on day-to-day operations of the Park. The two agencies work closely together on most aspects of Park operations.

Utilizing this model makes it easier for both organizations to meet their individual goals, as well as their shared goals, while keeping costs manageable for everyone involved. With local governments across the country struggling to reduce costs and lower budgets, implementing a similar approach could prove invaluable. Having seen the success of this project, other cities that are able to replicate this framework can do so with the confidence that they, too, will reach their goals.

5. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The most successful aspects of the project are its physical attributes—the popular and well-designed playground with its unique features, the dog park, the interactive fountain, the event lawn and stage, the restored bandstand, and the pastoral nature of the restored historic Park. Also quite successful are the many concerts, events and programs held in the Park, with attendance at some exceeding 5,000 people. This all adds up to the extraordinary success that the Park has seen in reaching and exceeding its goals of being a new center for the community and a place that people from many different walks of life feel comfortable visiting and enjoying. The project has also succeeded in bringing new residents, tenants, visitors and investors into the neighborhood to continue its redevelopment.

It is hard to point to any down sides or less successful aspects of the project. When the Park first reopened to the public there was a sense that, in the rush to have many events and programs in the Park, perhaps there was more traffic than the civic green/event lawn could handle. And, in the Park's first summer and fall seasons, the lawn did show some wear and tear. However, through trial-and-error during the two summer and fall seasons that followed, the Park Board and 3CDC have been able to make the necessary adjustments to ensure the civic lawn maintains the high level of quality seen throughout the rest of the Park.

---

**2015**  
**RUDY BRUNER AWARD**  
**PROFESSIONAL**  
**CONSULTANT**  
**PERSPECTIVE**




Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other services. Copies may be given to other professionals if desired.

Name	Teri Hendy	Title	President
Organization	Site Masters, Inc.	Telephone	(513) 460-5916
Address	49 St. Andrews Dr.	City/State/ZIP	North Bend, OH 45052
Fax ( )		E-mail	teri@sitemastersinc.com

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature		Date	12/4/2014
-----------	---	------	-----------

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

I was the design and safety consultant for the custom playground environment. I worked with the architectural team and the developer to create a playground environment that met the expectations of the City, the Over-the-Rhine Community and, perhaps most importantly, the children who would be utilizing it. Charrettes – or focus groups – were held with all three groups during the planning stages to ensure that parents' key concerns were met and children's interests were incorporated.

The resulting 18,000-square-foot, fenced children's playground was to provide a unique play experience not found in other playgrounds, while incorporating features that reflected the rich history of Cincinnati. Examples include: a canal boat residing within a small stream, symbolic of the Miami-Erie canal that used to flow through OTR and the boats that traversed it; a castle with a tower that resembles the water tower at Cincinnati's Eden Park; and a climbing wall, also a nod to Eden Park, which has a similar feature.

The majority of the playground elements were designed specifically for Washington Park. Site Masters Inc. worked with the manufacturers of the custom elements to ensure that they met the goals and objectives of the Design Team, were developmentally appropriate for the age of the children using the Park and met all industry safety standards.

In keeping with the inclusionary nature of the project as a whole, we also felt it was important to allow children with special needs the greatest access to all of the play components. Play areas with an accessible route of travel to 50% of play components meet ADA standards, regardless of whether children with mobility impairments can play on the components once they are reached. However, the surfaces that we used throughout the play area provide access to 90% of the play environment. And, our playground was designed to guarantee that all children who enter the play area can participate to the best of their ability.

2. Describe the project's impact on its community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

The redevelopment of Washington Park helped to bring economic life back to the community. Because of the huge appeal of the Park to people that live outside of the Over-the-Rhine community, business in the area is growing. Since the renovation was completed, more and more visitors are coming to see Washington Park and discovering a re-developed community with great shopping, a lively arts scene and wonderful dining opportunities. Because of the Park's initial success, people have continued to return to the City for their entertainment and we are beginning to see growth in the housing market in the area.

The Park has also benefitted the residents of OTR – both new and old, who have seen the formerly crime-ridden, dangerous area in the neighborhood transformed into an urban oasis right in their own backyard.

This combination of residents and visitors simultaneously enjoying the space is one of the most positive impacts the Park has had on the community as a whole – bringing people together. On any given day in the Park, you can see people of all ages, races, and economic backgrounds interacting with each other and enjoying this beautiful greenspace.

The playground is like a microcosm of the diversity found throughout the Park as a whole. Children who might not otherwise get the opportunity to interact with each other now have the chance to play together and broaden their horizons. Also, the addition of Play Ambassadors in the playground area has been a great way to help children learn important social skills, like waiting in line and being respectful of others, which will hopefully benefit the community for years to come.

## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

---

3. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession? Approximately 400 words.

The Design Team spent a lot of time learning what worked and did not work in other communities and gave much consideration to the selection of every element that went into the Park. We worked with community groups to gain an understanding of their wishes for the Park. This park was intended to be a focal point for not only the Over-the-Rhine community but for the entire greater Cincinnati area. Therefore, it had to have the appeal of a "destination park," while maintaining a sense of community intimacy. The design team wanted the Park to be inviting for people to spend a few minutes or a few hours. Frank Gehry says that architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness. I believe our concept speaks to the history of the Over-the-Rhine community while exulting in the cacophony of experience that is the City.

I think others could learn from the organization of space and the layering of activities and materials. The challenge was to organize these intricate layers so that they worked together, to play off of one another and yet create the beautiful harmony of people of all ages and abilities coming together to experience play with their mind, their bodies and their spirits. Play, in its purest form, is spontaneous. It is not directed. At Washington Park, children and adults engage with this liquid environment on their terms, creating their own play using the props that this Design Team gave them.

The creation of intimate spaces juxtaposed with large plaza-like areas, as well as cave-like spaces contrasted with areas to perch and observe the world, are examples of the rich contrast of experiences afforded by Washington Park. Creating spaces that could be used for multiple purposes was also important to the Community. For example, in the playground there is a stage that can be used for special events, community programming or for school groups to gather. This same stage provides a space for families to sit together, to spread out a blanket and let a baby crawl or have a picnic lunch. Young children use the space as a springboard for their imagination as they role play.

4. What do you consider to be the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

The diversity of the Park's users is our best success. People from the suburbs who, because of fear, would never have imagined spending a Friday night having a picnic after dark with their family in Washington Park are coming down on a regular basis. People of all ages, races and economic circumstances are playing together and learning from one another. I believe that it is through this type of playful environment that people learn about other cultures and community is created. Washington Park helped to bring a community back to life.

As an outside observer, I believe the least successful aspect of this project is its physical size, which is something we could not control. Even though we were able to expand the Park's original size by two acres, the programming that makes this Park such a success also brings so many people that on a beautiful summer day, there is hardly an unoccupied spot. There is nothing wrong with what we created, it simply points out how desperately we need more spaces like Washington Park in downtown Cincinnati.

---

**2015**  
**RUDY BRUNER AWARD**  
**ARCHITECT**  
**OR DESIGNER**  
**PERSPECTIVE**



Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

This sheet is to be filled out by a design professional who worked as a consultant on the project, providing design, planning, or other services. Copies may be given to other design professionals if desired.

Name	Christopher Manning, ASLA	Title	Principal/Owner
Organization	Human Nature, Inc.	Telephone	(513) 281-2211
Address	990 St. Paul Drive	City/State/ZIP	Cincinnati, OH 45206
Fax	(513) 281-2243	E-mail	cmanning@humannature.cc

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

Signature		Date	12/1/2014
-----------	---	------	-----------

1. Describe the design concept of this project, including urban design considerations, choice of materials, scale, etc. Approximately 400 words.

The Washington Park project brought together a unique public/private partnership to achieve mutually beneficial objectives and strategically critical goals for the City of Cincinnati and the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan region. In its 2007 Centennial Master Plan, the Cincinnati Park Board outlined a bold strategy to "call upon parks as agents of transformation," bringing people back to the urban core and enhancing livability at a scale not seen since the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution (when most American park systems were born, as part of the City Beautiful movement). Close to the same time that the Park Board's latest vision was being crafted, the Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) was being formed to revitalize the urban core. 3CDC envisioned an "asset-based revitalization strategy" that built upon key nodes of positive energy and then connecting the dots. Fountain Square, the Vine Street corridor and Washington Park were central to this approach, so it was natural for the two organizations to come together.

First, the two organizations hired a design team to lead a broad civic engagement process and to create a Master Plan for Washington Park. With a large, diverse Steering Committee, multiple public meetings, stakeholder group meetings, site interviews and playground charrettes with neighborhood children, a Master Plan vision emerged. Three essential ideas formed the basis of the plan – expanding the Park from 6 to 8 acres to provide more greenspace in a dense, urban, under-served neighborhood; the creation of a 450 space underground parking garage below the Park to serve the users of the Park, the surrounding neighborhood and arts institutions, as well as produce revenue for the Park; and the synthesis of park design ideas that preserved the pastoral "oasis" characteristics of the historic Park, while also adding contemporary amenities that the growing urban community needed.

2. Describe the most important social and programmatic functions of the design. Approximately 400 words.

Before the recent expansion and renovation of the Park, it was dangerous, run-down, and serving a limited number of potential user groups in the community. It was a place where homeless residents from the nearby social service agencies congregated, visible drug deals were commonplace, and crimes of all sorts were committed. The new Washington Park is a place where all people are welcome and where Cincinnati celebrates its cultural and natural history.

The Park is designed much like a building, with different "rooms" for different uses. The southern third of the Park is maintained as a shady lawn space with mature trees. The historic bandstand in the center has been restored and has become the crossroads and the beating heart of the Park, with an intimate plaza, dog park, custom play environment and interactive water feature around it. The northern third of the Park is a 2-acre green roof on top of the garage that creates a large civic space (the size of a football field) with stages and infrastructure to support major concerts and community events. Green infrastructure and sustainable design features are woven throughout, with native stones and plant materials, high-efficiency irrigation, extensive and intensive green roofs on structures, and dry wells to manage stormwater and reduce combined sewer overflows.

The success of this new design was evident within the renovated Park's first few months of operation in the summer of 2012, as it played host to events large and small – all at no charge. People of all ages, cultural backgrounds and economic status were co-mingling, laughing, smiling and sharing in positive community spirit. Two years later, the Park continues to flourish, as the number of events and visitors have both grown each year. The diversity of the patrons has also remained intact, and is seen by many as one of the greatest characteristics of the revitalized Park. There is truly no greater reward to the designers of civic spaces than to see the community embrace and enjoy those spaces in the ways that had been intended, and even more that had never been imagined.

# ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER PERSPECTIVE (CONT'D)

3. Describe the major challenges of designing this project and any design trade-offs or compromises required to complete the project. Approximately 400 words.

There were several major challenges to this project - socio-economic, civic engagement process, technical construction issues, two very different co-clients in the Cincinnati Park Board and 3CDC, and an accelerated schedule.

The socio-economic challenges have already been described above, in terms of trying to transform a problematic urban space into a successful and healthy one. Part of overcoming this, in addition to the physical design strategy also previously described, was the civic engagement process. The clients and project team worked very hard to include everyone and listen carefully to every voice. There were very contentious moments and topics, like losing the pool and basketball court, but patience, persistence and inclusivity prevailed, and the project was stronger because of it.

There were several technical construction challenges that were faced during the design and implementation of the Park, including the underground garage and the civic lawn and stage residing above it, a state-of-the-art interactive fountain, a custom play environment, and the urban core's first stormwater dry wells.

The two co-clients, while having shared urban revitalization objectives, also had very different design aesthetics and material preferences at times. This often translated into either a longer, more drawn-out design investigation to discover common ground and/or some level of compromise on one side or the other. Similar to the civic engagement process, however, while this may have made the design and construction process more challenging, it was worth the effort in making the final product stronger.

Finally, both the design process and the construction schedule were accelerated to ensure the Park was open for the World Choir Games in the summer of 2012. This minimized the amount of time for coordination and integration of design work by the many different disciplines on the large, multi-disciplinary design team; required the construction team to work under less than ideal seasonal conditions for some aspects of the work; pushed installation of many plantings and sod into the hot and dry summer months; and then forced a quick opening of the Park to multiple events and thousands of people. This challenge, while also difficult, was overcome with client leadership, good communications, great collaboration among the design team members, and an excellent construction team. Everyone came together in the best interest of the project to meet the demands of the accelerated schedule, and it paid off in community enjoyment, support and appreciation for the new Park.

4. Describe the ways in which the design relates to its urban context. Approximately 400 words.

Washington Park is a cornerstone civic space within a national historic neighborhood, Over-the-Rhine, which is the largest collection of Italianate buildings in the country. Adjacent to the Park are two National Historic Landmark buildings, Music Hall and Memorial Hall, as well as several beautiful churches, a new School for the Creative & Performing Arts, and several mixed-use historic buildings. The Park is one city block wide and two city blocks long.

Several strategies were employed as part of the Park's design to relate to this rich urban context:

- First, the main entrances to the Park were located in relation to the six points where the city grid interfaces with the site, creating safe, clearly defined and celebrated thresholds and gateways. The gateways were designed with limestone pillars and ornamental fencing, inspired by the existing historic columns, and accented with custom-designed tiles from Rookwood Pottery, a nationally renowned pottery company located in OTR, just a few blocks away from the Park.

- Second, the anatomy of the Park was organized to honor the north-south axis through the Park that extends all the way north to Findlay Market, and to create a new east-west axis that aligns with the rose window of Music Hall. This move established the opportunity for a grand civic space within the Park that compliments and visually links to one of our city's grandest buildings.

- Third, the richness, variety and craftsmanship of the surrounding buildings provided inspiration for the materials selection, patterns and high level of detail in the Park, using both native materials such as limestone and sandstone, as well as highly refined materials such as granite, porphyry and ornamental metals.

- Finally, the restoration of surrounding buildings provided a source of inspiration for the Park as well, with the juxtaposition of old and new. As one enters one of the newly renovated buildings, there is an immediate sense that the old "bones" of the building have been preserved, with exposed beams and columns, old floors and brick walls, etc. Played against these historic components are new, contemporary furnishings, finishes and amenities that serve the needs of today. The Park design was approached in much the same way. The historic walls, bandstand and pastoral character are maintained, but they are integrated with new elements that serve a growing contemporary urban community today. Taken together, they form a visual timeline of human interaction with this place.

---

**2015**  
**RUDY BRUNER AWARD**  
**OTHER**  
**PERSPECTIVE**



# OTHER PERSPECTIVE

---

Please answer questions in space provided. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Fax (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The undersigned grants the Bruner Foundation permission to use, reproduce, or make available for reproduction or use by others, for any purpose whatsoever, the materials submitted. The applicant warrants that the applicant has full power and authority to submit the application and all attached materials and to grant these rights and permissions.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What role did you play in the development of this project? Approximately 400 words.

2. Describe the impact that this project has had on the your community. Please be as specific as possible. Approximately 400 words.

3. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? Approximately 400 words.

4. What do you consider to be the the most and least successful aspects of this project? Approximately 400 words.

---

# 2015 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

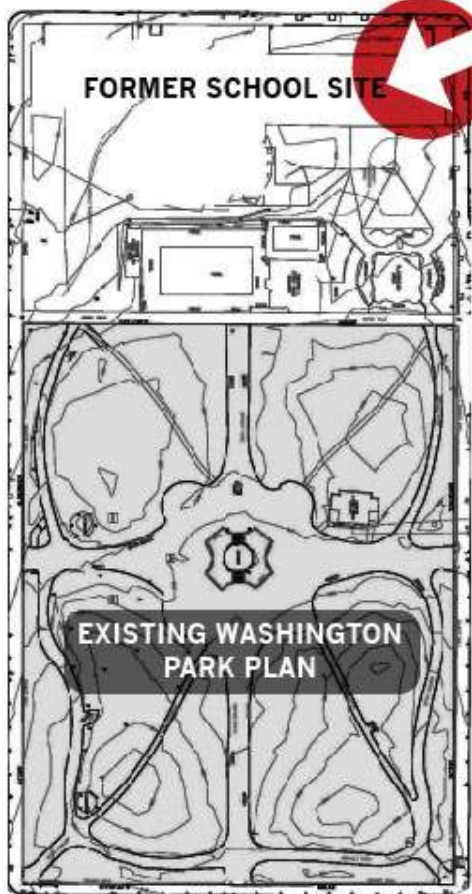
## Washington Park Restoration



## Existing Site Conditions



# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



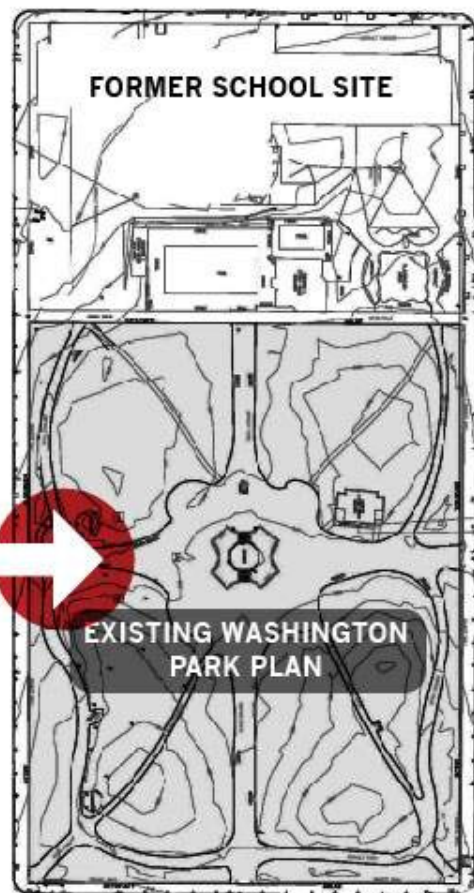
# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



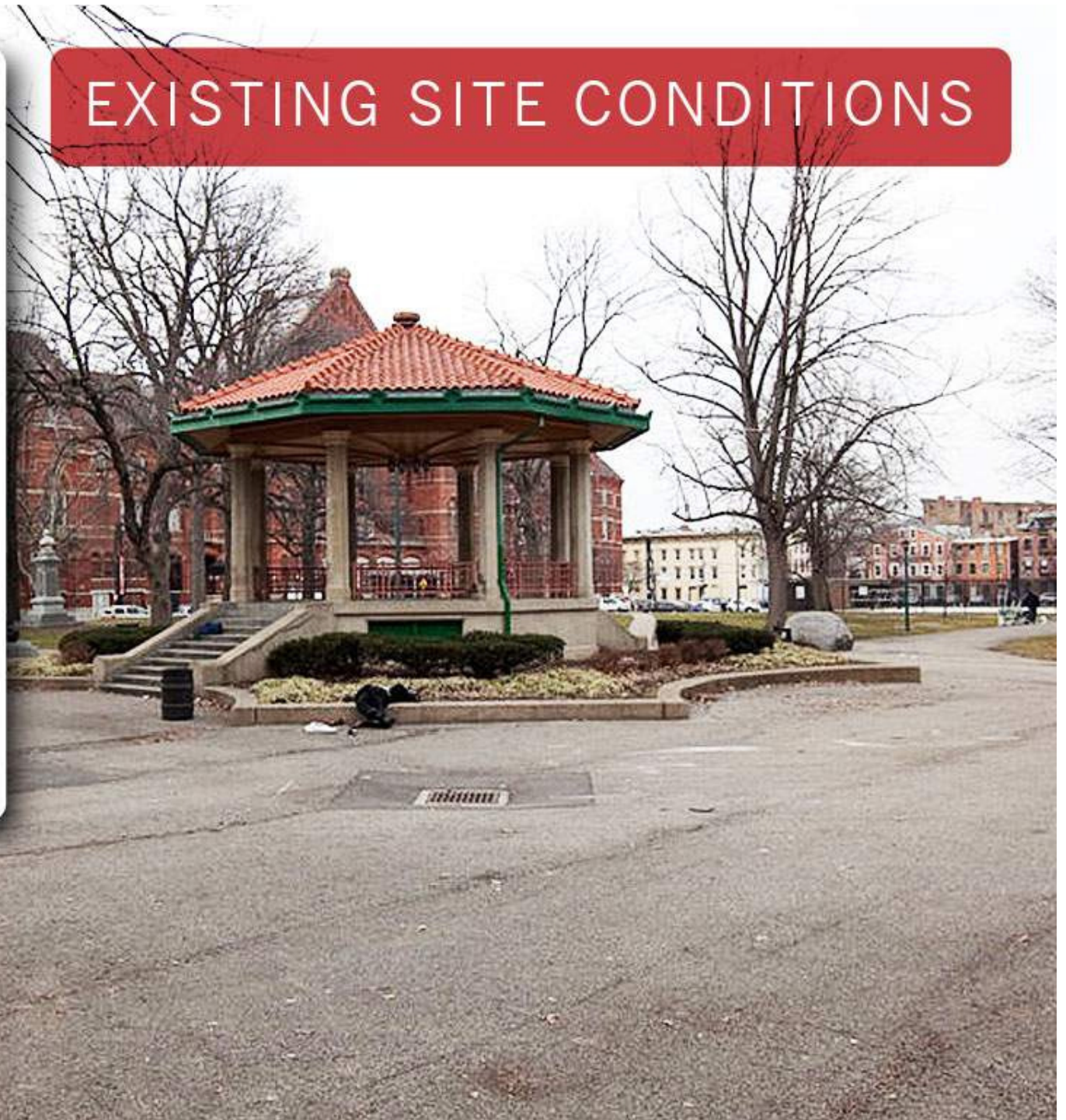
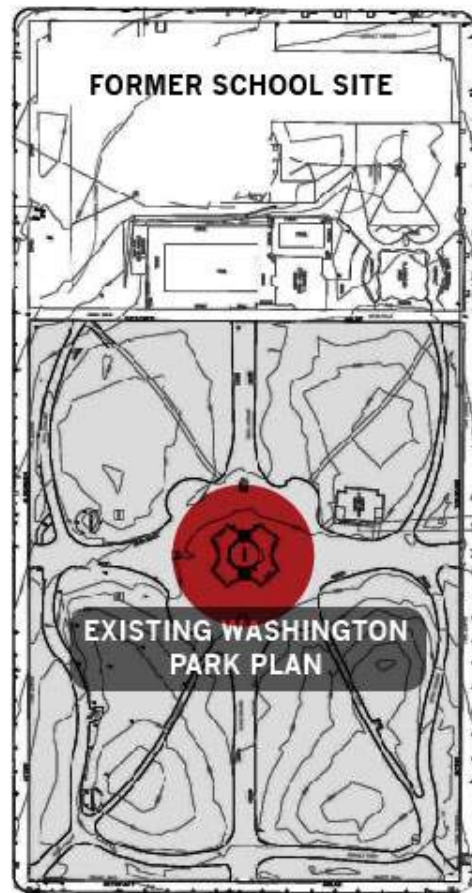
# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



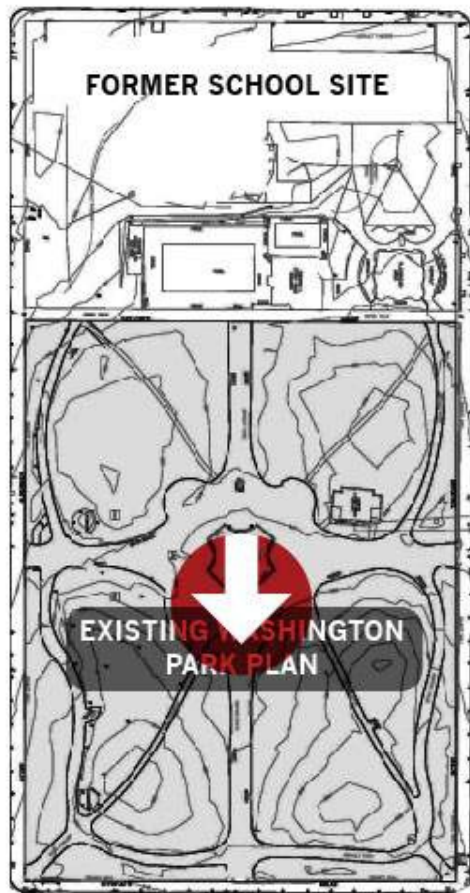
# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



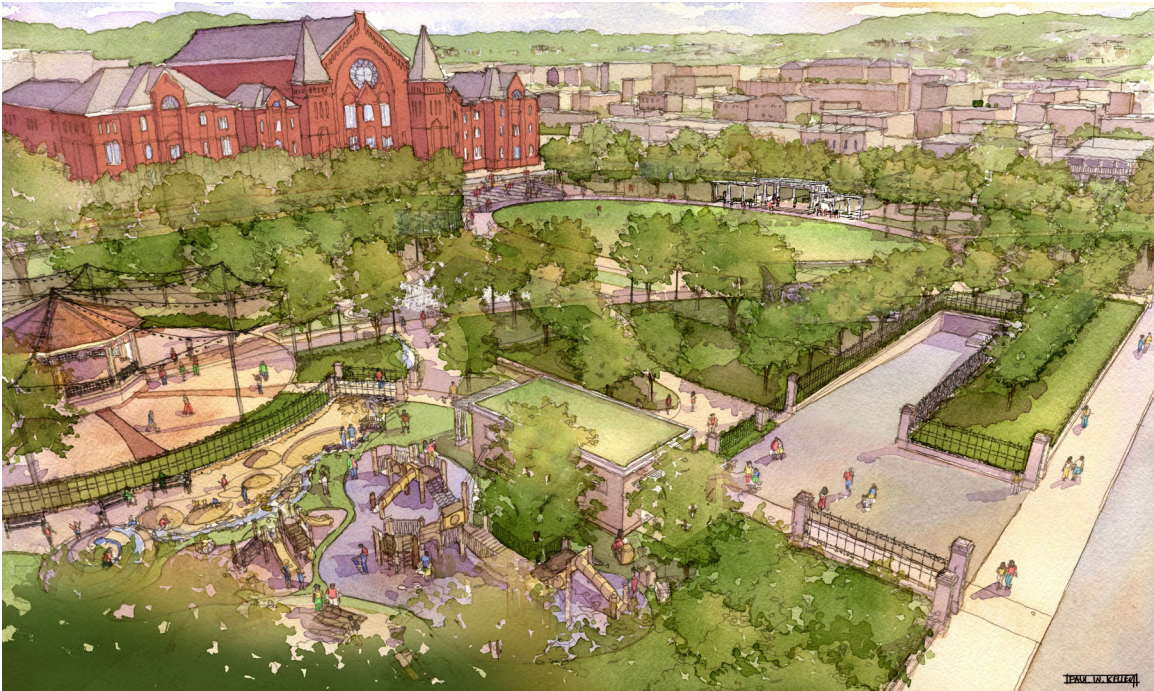
# EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



---

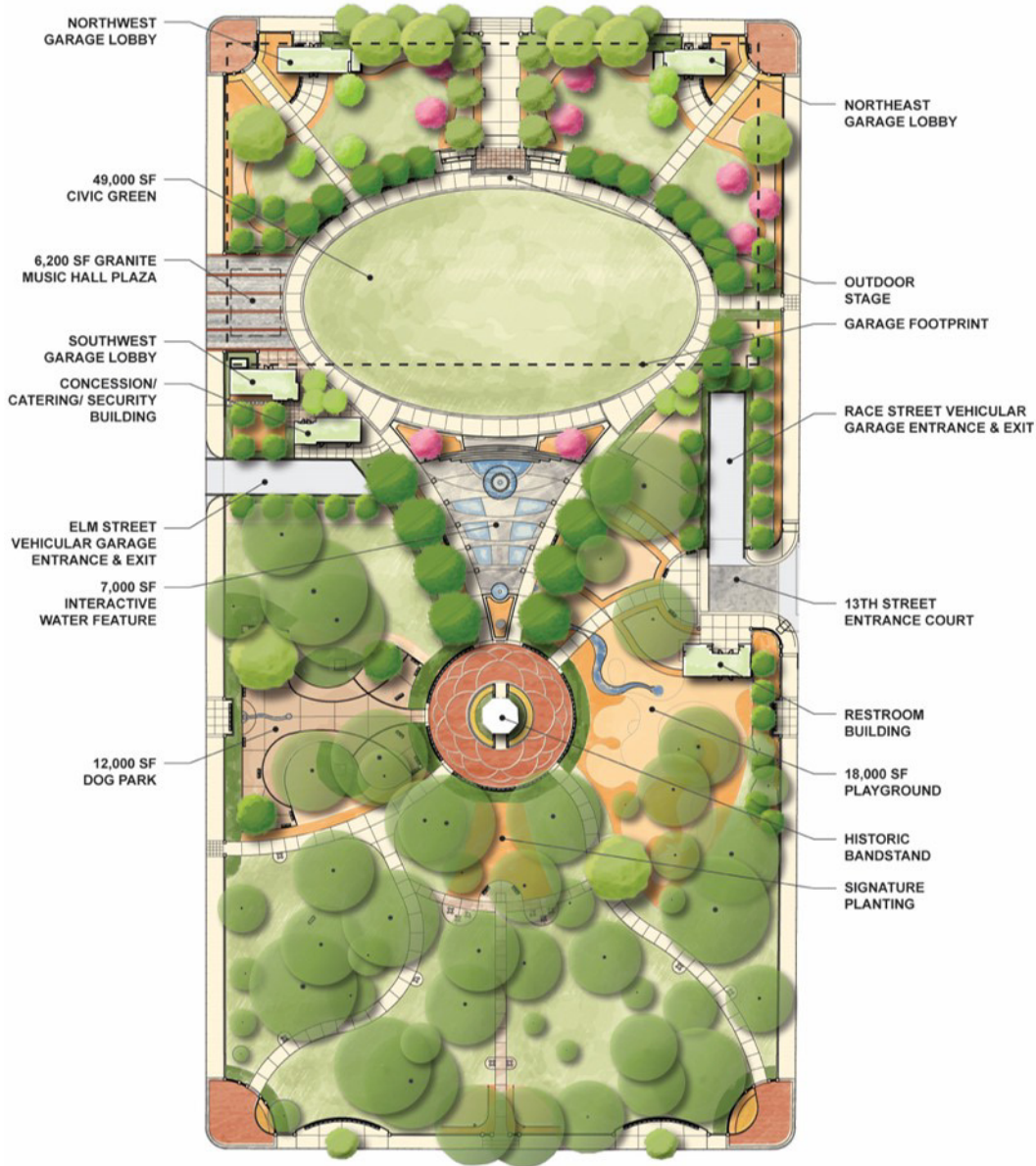
# 2015 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

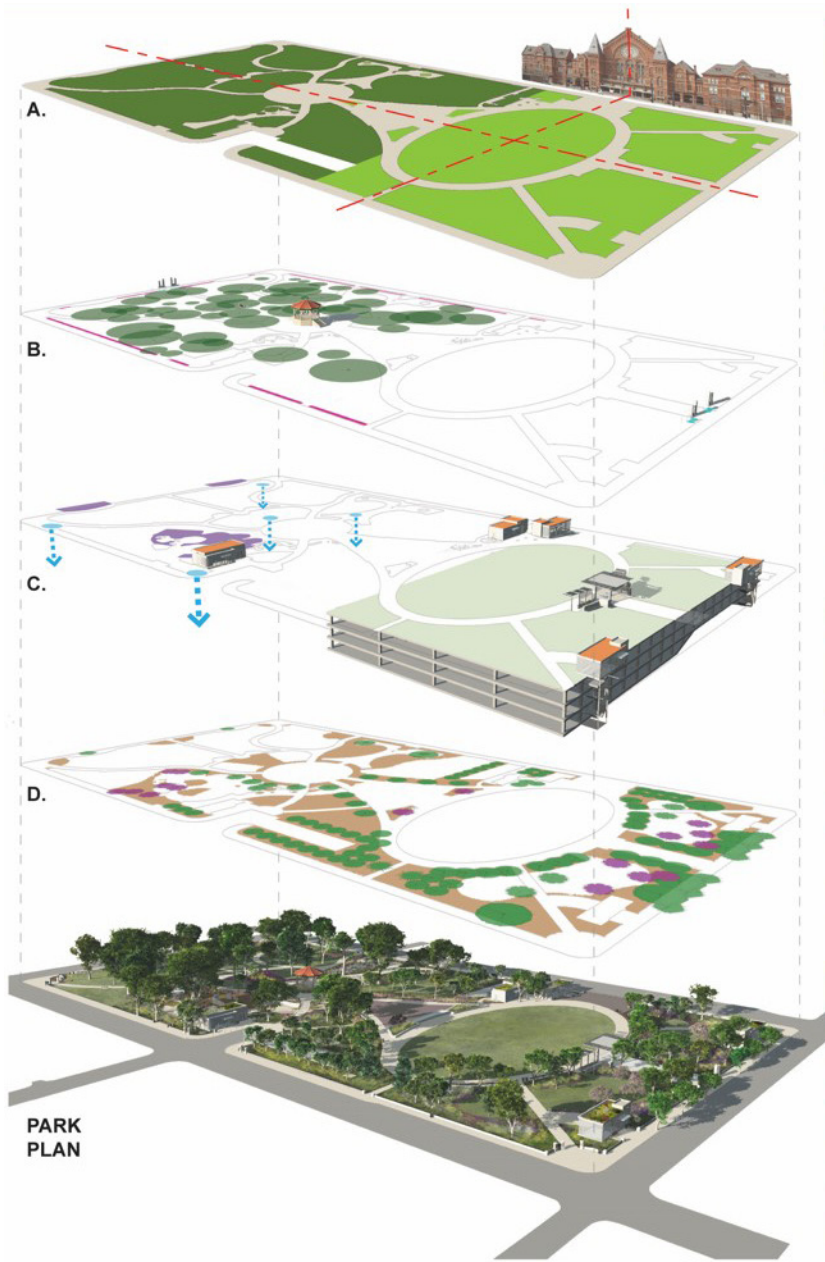
## Washington Park Restoration



## Site Renderings







**A. EXPANDED GREENSPACE (6 ac. to 8 ac.)**



EXISTING GREENSPACE



EXPANDED GREENSPACE

*Vibrant  
Urban Ecology*

**B. PRESERVATION, RESTORATION, SALVAGE & REUSE**



RENOVATED BANDSTAND



PRESERVED TREES



SALVAGED WALL



SALVAGED & RENOVATED COLUMNS

**C. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FEATURES**



INTENSIVE GREEN ROOF OVER PARKING GARAGE



DRY WELL



POROUS SURFACING



EXTENSIVE GREEN ROOF

**D. ENHANCED SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE**



NATIVE PERENNIALS



NATIVE TREES



ENGINEERED SOIL



HIGH-PERFORMANCE IRRIGATION

---

# 2015 RUDY BRUNER AWARD

## Washington Park Restoration



## Revitalization Realized





















