

_EVOLVING URBANISM
LIFE AT THE EPICENTER

_MOVING IDEAS FORWARD
IDEATION TO REALITY

_ISLAND STRONG
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

_FROM SHOPPING TO SOCIAL
THE RETAIL TRANSFORMATION



design
matters
A VISUAL GUIDE INTO THE LIFE OF EDSA



**GREAT DESIGN IS THE
RESULT OF MAKING EVERY
DETAIL PERFECT AND
LIMITING THE NUMBER OF
DETAILS TO PERFECT.**

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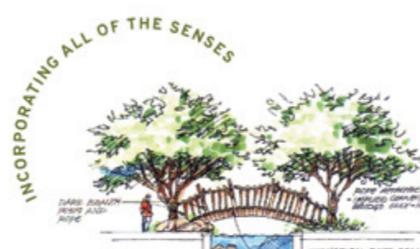
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BRAND ESSENCE

letter from the president

We put a lot of thought and effort into evolving EDSA as a business and as a brand. We believe brand is a reflection of what we do, how and why we do it, and for whom. In today's multimedia dominated world, managing image reputation is more important than ever. Simply put, it is a matter of survival.

Consider the pace of change in technology and transportation in recent years and their resulting impact on social change. Innovations that once felt modern and compelling can lose power quickly. Similarly, trends and priorities can swiftly change which also affect perceptions of a brand. When people see a logo or even a lobby space that feels dated, there is a sense that a company may be out-of-touch with current practices and future needs. It is on this premise that EDSA undertook the task of refreshing our own brand.

We began the effort by considering the intersection of three perspectives – that of our clients, our people, and the experiences of consumers who interact with environments we create. Our response was to carry forward the common attributes that speak to each of these groups – namely, unencumbered design with timeless appeal. This focused updating efforts around concisely conveying our company value, promise, and essence while also maintaining familiarity and simplicity. The result of this work can now be seen in EDSA's brand graphic elements (i.e., logo, color palette, and fonts), collateral materials, digital media platforms, and all client communications.

The most visible aspect of our brand update is our logo. To communicate the transparency with which we work, we unlocked the square around the letter mark – reflecting our openness to new ideas. Moving forward from a box that tags our work, the new logo serves as a window with the EDSA name bridging the box perimeter – reminding us, that we serve to make connections with and among our clients and collaborators, and between people and places. The use of custom lowercase lettering reflects our humility and creates a sense of equality between the company and all those who interact with our brand. As an element of consistency, the historic red color has persisted showcasing our deep belief in the principles of stewardship, responsibility, and innovation.

With projects that stretch around the globe, we have empowered every EDSA employee to serve as a Brand Ambassador in communicating a clear and consistent identity. With a unified brand vision, our goal is to continue setting EDSA apart as a strategic leader in the land planning and design industry.

Douglas C. Smith, PLA, ASLA
President & Principal

EVOLVING URBANISM

With the global population expected to reach 9.8 billion by 2050 and cities serving as home to over half of the world's populace, the question remains – can metropolitan centers be economically strong, enjoyable to live in, and promote environmental conservation simultaneously?

Today's urban planners and designers say **yes**.

Traditional development mindsets are changing and the contours of the urban renaissance are focusing on new technologies, environmental awareness, and demographic adaptation. "As we evolve, our cities must evolve with us," suggests EDSA Principal Richard Centolella. "Today's urbanites are creating markets for mixed-use/mixed-income models and their behaviors and preferences are informing how, why, and where revitalization happens."

Other redevelopment considerations related to people, place, and purpose include an increasing senior population that is driving demand for barrier-free housing design and quality healthcare facilities. In another example, smart institutions, research universities, and medical centers are becoming community anchors and spinning off public amenities. And, energy challenges are placing a premium on transportation alternatives with preference given to public transit, Uber/Lyft, and autonomous vehicles. "As landscape architects and urban designers, we are responding to consumers' needs and preferences by advancing concepts of sustainability, walkability, and affordability – making our cities more dynamic, more attractive, more connected, and more essential to global prosperity," says Centolella.



LAND IS THE MOST NECESSARY COMMODITY IN A CITY ENVIRONMENT.

SO, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER THAT EACH PARCEL, AND EACH SQUARE FOOT SERVE AS MANY FUNCTIONS AS POSSIBLE.

Keith Weaver, Associate Principal

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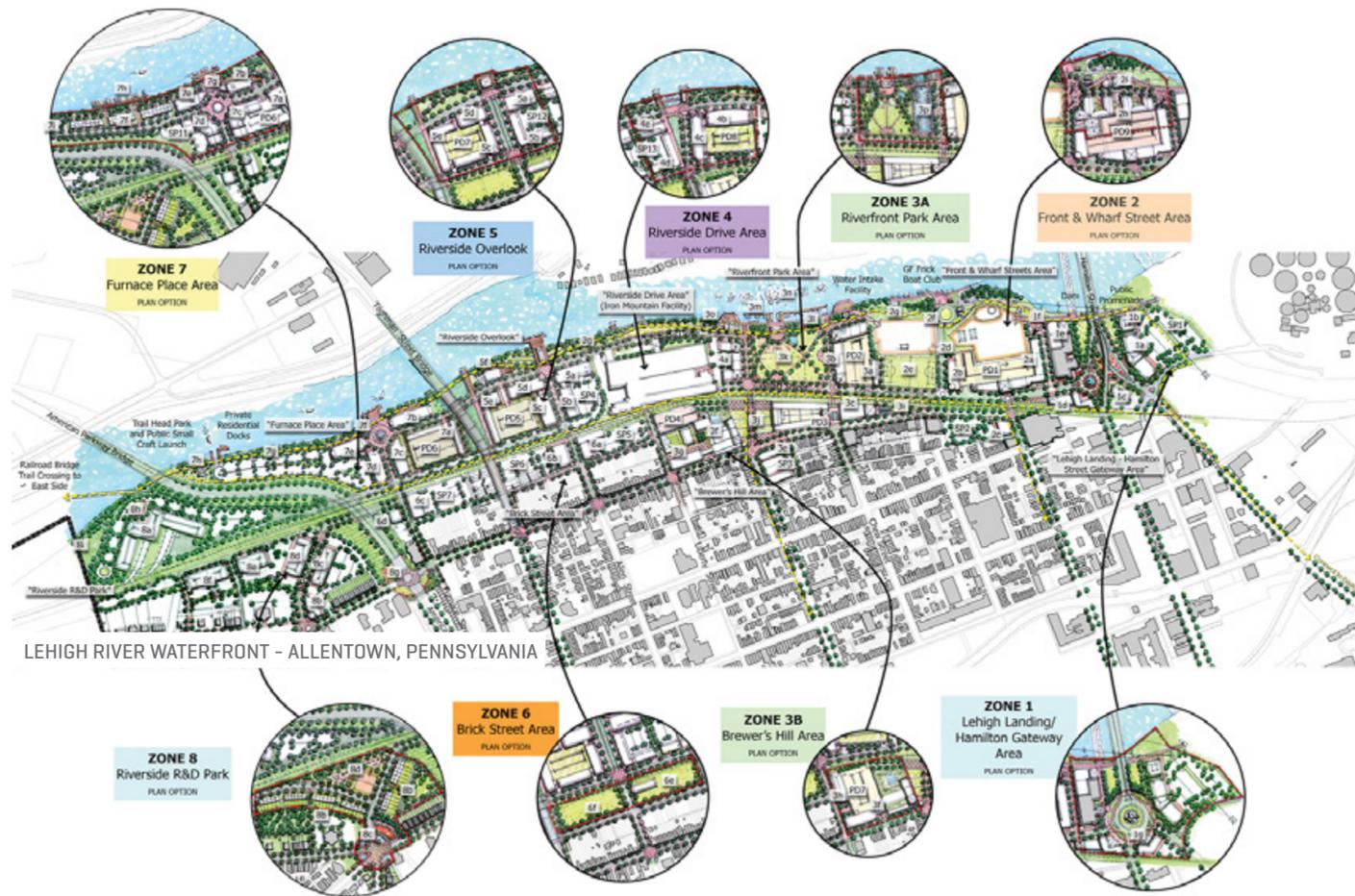
Life at the Epicenter

Generally, people choose to live in urban areas to be at the heart of economic activity, to have better job opportunities, and to make the most of social and cultural offerings. However, the quality of life that comes with city living is not without its challenges. Air pollution, water quality, waste management, and the aging of urban infrastructure remain acute concerns.

"Urban leaders must strive to make their cities contributors to environmental solutions," advocates EDSA Principal Paul Kissinger. Safe drinking water, clean air quality, reduced energy consumption, and proper waste disposal are basic quality of life elements. Implementing and monitoring programs, legislation, and incentives that focus on natural resource preservation and pollution reduction must remain a top focal point to achieve an improved urban core without high environmental costs.

Kissinger continues, "Creating conditions to draw private investment to urban areas starts with an integrated approach that supports a low carbon economy and modernization of existing infrastructure."

As such, developers and municipalities are working together to rediscover underutilized brownfield sites and aged facilities – reinventing them as quality developments that not only address community needs but consciously improve concerns of air quality, water run-off, and ground contamination. In other instances, reconstruction of aged and low capacity sewer and stormwater systems is allowing for higher densities and infill redevelopment while the conversion and reuse of municipal land holdings to tax bearing properties provides for greater efficiencies and economic viability. "Municipalities must do the leg work to offer multi-functional and multi-purposeful communities if they are to position their cities as platforms for growth."



LEHIGH RIVER WATERFRONT - ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

MUNICIPALITIES MUST DO THE LEG WORK TO OFFER MULTI-FUNCTIONAL AND MULTI-PURPOSEFUL COMMUNITIES IF THEY ARE TO POSITION THEIR CITIES AS PLATFORMS FOR GROWTH.

Paul Kissinger, Principal

One of the biggest hurdles urban districts must overcome, if they are to achieve sustainable growth, is the ability to expand opportunities without expanding expenses. Enter the world of 'smart' technology. Smart phones, smart cars, smart air conditioning, smart doorbells, and even smart water bottles make it clear that technology has become fully integrated into everyday life. So, it is not surprising that cities are looking to do the same on a larger municipal scale. According to a McKinsey research report, the smart city industry is projected to hit the \$400 billion mark by 2020 and encompass 600 cities worldwide.

"The smart city movement is not a gimmick," says Associate Principal Keith Weaver. Barcelona, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Nice, Singapore, and Dubai are just some of the cities that have adopted smart city technologies for information, communication, and automation. "Using technology to simplify and streamline public works with real-time data gathering and automated system tasks adds a level of responsiveness that just is not possible with human intervention alone." Smart litter bins alert sanitation service providers when it's time to collect trash and automated irrigation systems detect when plants and crops need to be fed and watered. Computer automation is also helping first responders arrive faster, assisting police in reducing crime, decreasing peak energy loads, and scheduling public transit arrival times.

Part of what's driving such widespread implementation in the public realm is the success of these technologies in adding value. Instead of theorizing about situations, a combination of services, features, feedback, and touchpoints help elected officials and their constituents make informed decisions about what future developments and improvements a city and its residents need. "Cities are being tasked to do more with less and smart city design has the power to make businesses more profitable, our lives more enriching, and our cities more financially and environmentally sustainable," explains Weaver.

Small Footprint. Huge Demand.

Greater demand for core urban sites almost always means higher land prices and housing costs where affordability is pushed to the periphery. To offer competitive rents and sales prices, increased density is often the best solution. Density however, frequently generates a negative response from those who only see large, overbearing structures and increased traffic. "Good design can be an antidote to such opposition," pronounces Kissinger. "Creative design can alleviate the mass of larger structures with simple elements such as the use of glass at ground levels, wider sidewalks, staggered building heights to maintain sight lines, step backs, and formidable landscaping that provides comfort and respite from the concrete urban grid."

The design for urban sites must be imagined as a compatible pattern of mixed-uses to create an urban village that encourages resident engagement and creates loyalties to neighborhood businesses. Adding to the social fabric, concepts for trails and bike paths, accessible public areas,

interactive business centers, traffic calming, better public transit, and the live-work-play standard are essential components of the cities of today. 'Place-making', once the watchword of every urban designer, is no longer enough. "Now it's about an experience – and how the buildings and the spaces between them are treated in relation to human-scale design. This is where the rediscovery of a city's unique attributes and assets can be leveraged for authenticity and contextualism," explains Kissinger.

These demands are impacting urban development in a variety of new, inventive ways. "Cities, like every other industry, compete for customers or in this case residents, businesses, and employers. This requires a continuous review of methods for attracting these different user groups and maintaining high quality of life offerings to continually grow their populations," says Centolella. Incorporation of open space as part of a larger urban experience is one solution.



WATER STREET DISTRICT - TAMPA, FLORIDA



SHÀNWĒI WATERFRONT WEST - GUANGDONG PROVINCE, CHINA

The American Planning Association's 'Health Plan Initiative' and Urban Land Institute's 'Principles of Healthy Living' are two of many programs that place the health and well-being of citizens at the forefront. James Rouse, the revered city builder, designed Baltimore's Inner Harbor principally as a venue to bring people outdoors. He understood the importance of creating common areas where people can safely relax and enjoy the urban setting. Today, welcoming public realm spaces can take many forms.

"We are finding innovative ways to weave nature into city spaces with urban wildlife habitats, open space corridors, rooftop gardens, urban farms, green walls, and pocket parks that add to the urban fabric," explains Centolella. Plantings, water features, street furniture, public art, exercise equipment, performance stages, jogging paths, and pet parks are all desirable features that help make the urban environment more humane. "In each case, the benefits of these spaces reach beyond its direct output." He continues, "Developers and cities have discovered the value green spaces and connectivity bring – not just from an aesthetic aspect or a convenience perspective – but from a tangible dollar value." In some cities, proximity to parks results in a significant increase in property values. In others, residents are more willing to pay premium prices or rents to be within walking distance to greenways.

With more people engaged in the city's streets, transportation must provide equal safe access for pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and motorists. This has been the focus of the 'Complete Streets Initiative' which includes design elements such as wider sidewalks, well-marked or raised crosswalks, traffic calming measures, protected bike lanes, and pedestrian safety islands. Complete Streets can help reduce municipal and personal transportation costs and improve health by significantly reducing crash rates, injuries, and fatalities. In addition, Complete Streets are often better designed than conventional streets with features such as park strips, street trees, and site furnishings that enhance economic opportunity and social interaction. "Land is the most necessary commodity in a city environment," adds Weaver. "So, it is more important than ever before that each parcel, and each square foot serve as many functions as possible."

These economic and social calculations almost always involve urban real estate decisions. To encourage private development that aligns with municipal goals, cities may provide temporary or declining property tax abatements for relocations and expansions. Or, they may offer cash outlays from bond programs to offset construction costs of targeted property types such as workforce and affordable housing. In addition, urban governments may pursue public-private partnerships to achieve a desired outcome – working with the city's best and brightest to address neighborhood flight, blight, and renewal, and instead offer a positive future for the urban dynamic. "A city is only as healthy as it's neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and public systems," says Weaver. "Quality neighborhoods, education, and opportunities are critical to keeping families in cities – for generations to come."

On a global scale, city leaders are realizing that cooperative and forward-thinking planning and design is the secret behind more social and environmentally sustainable development. They are also realizing they can improve their economic progress by delivering a better balance between people, profit, and the planet – an investment many metropolitan communities are now very eager to explore.



DUBAI OPERA - DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

As we evolve,
OUR CITIES MUST

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M
WITH US.**

Richard Centolella, Principal



POMPAÑO BEACH

Complete Streets Initiative

POMPAÑO BEACH, FLORIDA

Focusing on downsizing travel lanes to create better transit, bike and pedestrian spaces in the heart of Old Town, the Pompano Beach Complete Streets Initiative adds to community livability, improves public health, and promotes sustainability. Narrowing of traffic lanes, multi-purpose paths, and 4.4 miles of uninterrupted well-surfaced trails are in the best interest of all city residents. This project also addresses improving public utility infrastructure to support redevelopment in the nearby innovation district.



CITY OF SAVANNAH

Streetscape Design

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

The City of Savannah is reclaiming some of its most notable streets and urban corridors for people. Drawing inspiration from the town's coastal roots, the streetscape design weaves open spaces within existing urban patterns. Widened sidewalks, new walkways, information kiosks, bike racks and lanes, medians, bioswales and plantings improve the pedestrian experience. Currently underway, the plan provides a safe public realm that is centered upon visual identity, green infrastructure, ADA and bicycle safety, smart transportation, historic preservation and functionality.

LAS OLAS CORRIDOR

Catalytic Public Realm

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

The \$49 million Las Olas Corridor project will bring two new waterfront parks to Fort Lauderdale beach, along with more green space, multi-modal transportation alternatives, a tree-lined promenade, streetscape enhancements, and a state-of-the-art parking facility. By reclaiming and realigning city lands for public open space, the design establishes boundary markers, creates an arrival court, and reinforces walkable connections to and from the water. Natural and man-made patterns form a juxtaposition between ecological systems and the urban grid for a catalytic public realm.



NATIONAL HEROES PARK

Public Private Partnerships

KINGSTON, JAMAICA

In Kingston Jamaica, the Government plans on spending some \$2.5 billion redeveloping National Heroes Park in its downtown core as a major tourist attraction and home of the Parliament. The consolidation of government facilities will also create affordable and workforce housing neighborhoods surrounding the new Government Center.



BRIGHTLINE

Intercity Travel

MIAMI, FLORIDA

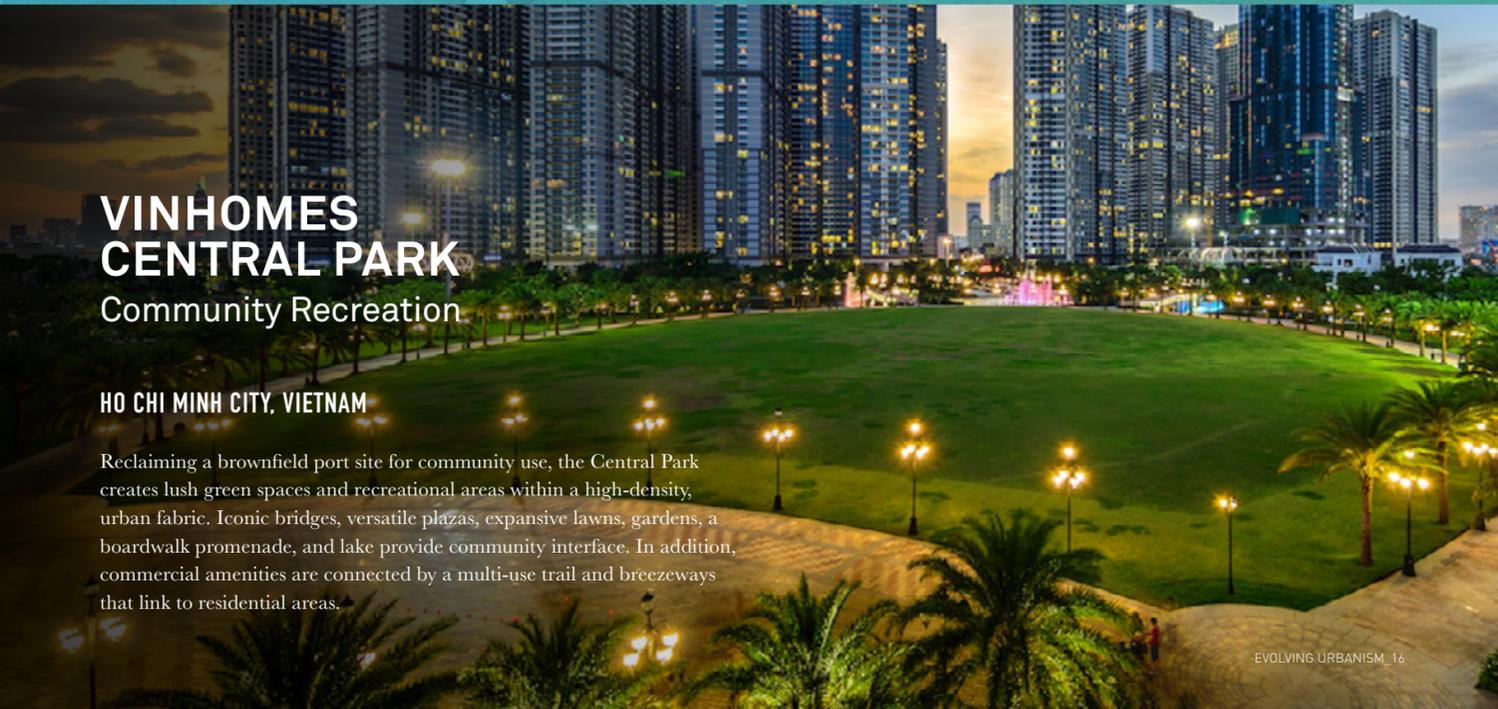
A billion-dollar passenger rail service, the Brightline is transforming intercity travel. Focused on improving efficiencies and offering a sustainable, cost-effective means for travel, the central stations have a network of connected spaces and streetscapes that interweave public transit with private redevelopment. Promoting community connectivity and pedestrian accessibility, design of the Miami Station reinforces a sense of place with active and passive uses, civic features, public art, and a mix of development types.

VINHOMES CENTRAL PARK

Community Recreation

HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

Reclaiming a brownfield port site for community use, the Central Park creates lush green spaces and recreational areas within a high-density, urban fabric. Iconic bridges, versatile plazas, expansive lawns, gardens, a boardwalk promenade, and lake provide community interface. In addition, commercial amenities are connected by a multi-use trail and breezeways that link to residential areas.





Moving Ideas Forward

From Thought to Reality

It has been said that creativity is like LEGOS. If there are only a few of the same brick in a bucket, the outcome is drab and uniform. But, with a bag of colorful bricks of various shapes and sizes, the imaginative is inspiring. “Anyone can optimize their creativity by enriching their mental pool of resources with diverse, eclectic, cross-disciplinary pieces that can be rearranged into new combinations,” suggests Senior Associate, Gabriela Patocchi. “Anyone can be trained to capture the essence of place if they are curious, lift their eyes, open their mind – stay alert and stay engaged. After all, the average design is not the result of little effort, rather the lack of inspiration.”

There is an enduring curiosity about creative ideation – the Eureka! moment, the stroke of genius, the proverbial light bulb – and how ‘new’ ideas take shape. Hats off to the celebrated artists, writers, inventors, and designers who seamlessly connect the seemingly dissociated and see patterns, form, and function where others see chaos.

DANCING WATER



Concept Sketch



JADE RIBBON



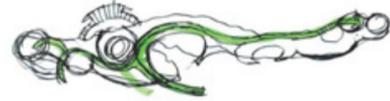
Concept Sketch



RUYI



Concept Sketch



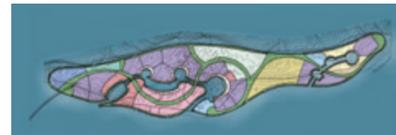
Concept Diagram



Land Use Plan



Conceptual Master Plan



RUYI ISLAND IDEATION PROCESS

HAIKOU, CHINA

Final Master Plan Rendering

The Spark

While everyone follows a different path to inspiration, the mechanics are largely the same from one person to the next. At the heart of creativity is connection or the ability to make connections – between items, ideas, people, and places that seem unrelated. Often, the more connections a concept has, the more interesting and intricate it becomes. To achieve this, the brain generates ideas from information it holds related to experience and knowledge. Experience, in this instance, comes from doing things such as traveling, exploring, and engaging while knowledge is gained from research, reading, listening, and learning.

In order to generate original ideas, the amount of information the brain possesses must be continuously increased with an improved ability to recall and repurpose that information when needed. “Everyone gathers inspiration from different mediums and in different ways but knowing how to trigger those creative juices is an important part of being a design professional,” shares Patocchi. “True creativity occurs when existing insights, knowledge, and memories are combined with new material and interpretations to solve design challenges.”

A thorough visioning process can stimulate the generation and development of breakthrough ideas. These sessions are rarely the product of one mind but rather the result of a cross-pollination of people, ideas, and approaches – each influencing and building upon the other. Associate Principal Eric Propes explains, “With base information of a site, we begin the ideation process free of semantics as to why an idea won’t work. We let go of harsh judgements and allow all ideas – brilliant, mediocre, and outrageous – to flow through our minds. This process allows us to explore all potential avenues of a project design and accumulate as many concepts as possible before filtering them by logic. In the end, some ideas are not going to be viable, but others will be astonishing. Only after a solid project narrative has been agreed upon, do we move into the next phase of design which considers what fits, what’s relative, and what’s feasible within the site’s parameters.”

With a culture anchored in creativity and innovation, EDSA has a team of designers who are self-motivated and not afraid to fail. From there, the focus has been on developing a positive environment that is centered on designing projects for successful implementation. “Internal design reviews create opportunities for team members to engage and contribute to the ideation process,” says Propes. “Ideas often build upon each other to formulate a story that has legs and gains traction. It is the contribution of multiple people offering varying perspectives that aids in the generation of new and unique ideas.”

Propes recalls the ideation process for Ruyi Island in China. Extensive research into underwater topography, prevailing winds, wave conditions, and weather patterns informed the shape and configuration of the island – giving way to a recognizable geometry that is not only reliant on water as a connective element but conforms with the currents to protect the island from tidal fluxes and storms.

The 574-hectare island uses themed cultural related districts, lagoons, beaches, and internal water streets to create a unique sense of place that all relate back to the surrounding sea. The aquatic interior network radiates from a central core and seamlessly connects and transitions people between districts. With an initial investment of \$250 million, the project is positioned as a high-end tourism destination with a theme park, museums, and malls, as well as villas, commercial, hospitality, wellness, and entertainment offerings.

True creativity occurs when existing insights, knowledge, and memories are combined with new material and interpretation to solve design challenges.

GABRIELA PATOCCHI, SENIOR ASSOCIATE

Finding the common thread in what the client is passionate about, what is beneficial to the site, and what enhances the user experience – is the point of contact from which ideas flourish.

DEREK GAGNE - ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

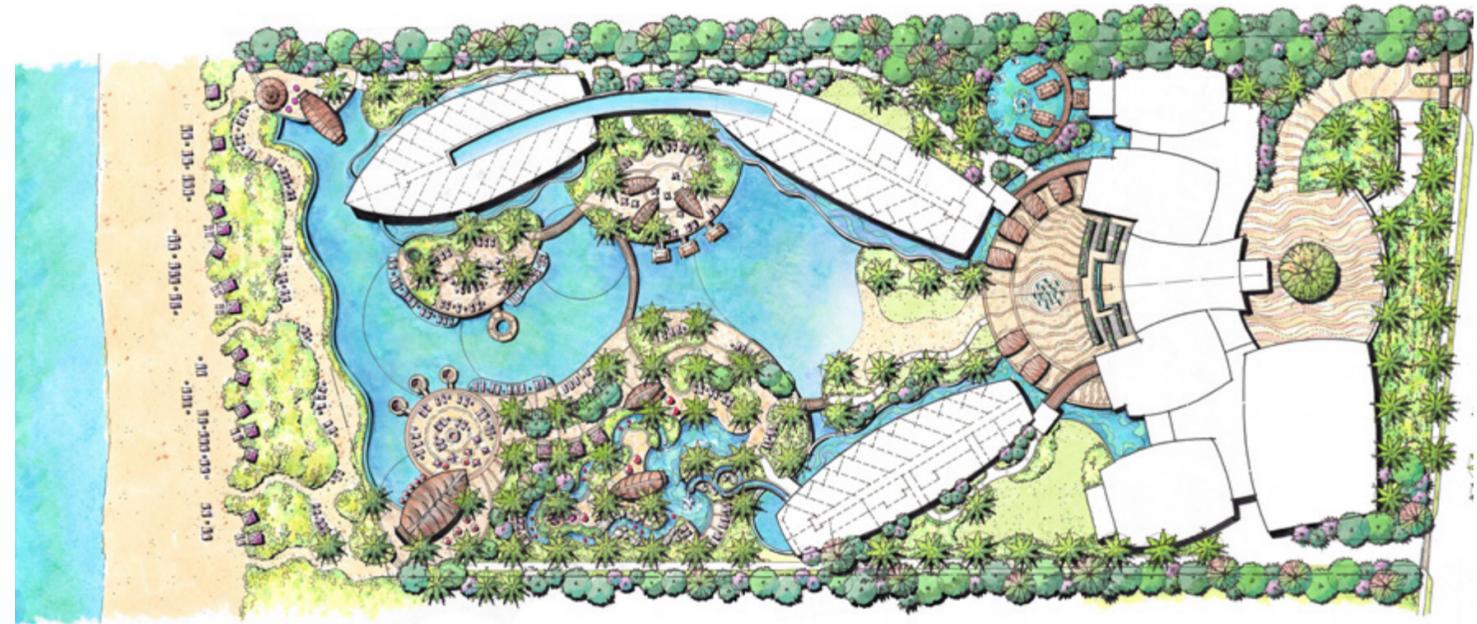
Turning Up the Heat

An effective vision must not only be inspiring but strategically sound and implementable. “Visioning helps us stay on course, align design thinking, and make decisions more effectively,” explains Associate Principal Derek Gagne. A carefully crafted and properly documented vision keeps everyone engaged and helps all team members understand how their work contributes to the building of a holistic project narrative. “In essence, it becomes the ‘heartbeat’ of the project – forming a storyline that supports the cultural construct of a place, space, and time.”

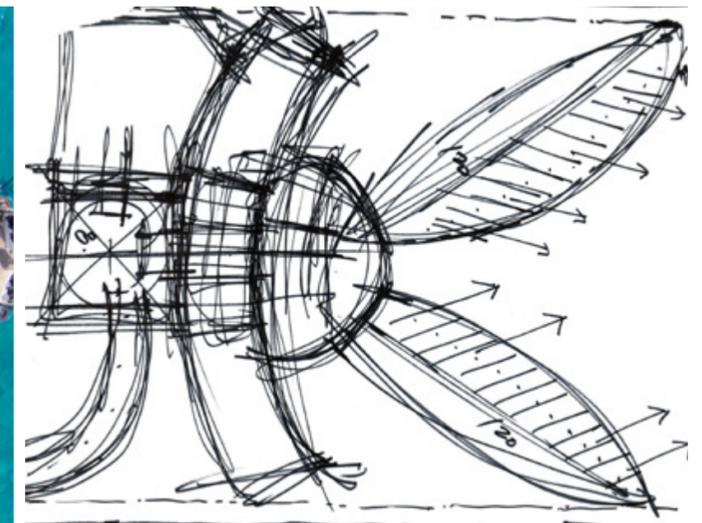
Once knowledge about the physical characteristics of a site have been assimilated, the ideation process evolves into illuminating the user experience and verifying probability of the design outcome. Actualizing the idea means keeping the ‘big idea’ relevant as a standard of measure while addressing how it will be executed. In addition to site visits and personal experiences, this phase relies on data and research to refine the story of a place. “Everyone likes a ‘big idea’ but if you cannot implement it, it’s useless. That’s where case studies, design inspiration, research, and experience matter. We must continually ask ourselves, ‘why would someone come here?’ and allow that context to influence our design,” says Gagne.

The logistics and planning stage of ideation is important because without it a project can’t succeed. Ideas need to make their way into reality if they are to have a chance at becoming inspirational for others in the future. With that in mind, taking a concept from vision to implementation entails active listening – to the client, the land, and the people. “For a project to be unique, it needs its own story,” says Gagne. It can be as subtle as inlaid tiles that educate guests on Mayan history, or working intricately detailed surfaces that are weathered and worn into site materials in celebration of the local surf culture. “The goal of design is to have a visitor, resident, or guest, understand the story of the landscape from start to finish. Finding the common thread in what the client is passionate about, what is beneficial to the site, and what enhances the user experience – is the point of contact from which ideas flourish.”

Consider the overall concept design for Katara Towers in Doha. The proposed urban project subtly uses water, sun, and light to create a context of what is special to modern Arabic culture. Using traditional forms to organize spaces, the team mediated the site’s expansiveness to ensure an optimal experience at a human scale. Supporting the idea of a ‘desert mirage,’ spaces play with reflections where tilted water basins highlight a palm oasis offset by a feature wall beyond. Fog in recessed plantings creates the illusion of the floating trees. Water ripples and sand dunes, two of the simplest elements making up the Qatari landscape, offer impactful imagery and recall the rich natural resources and wealth that has afforded Qatar its future.



FIESTA AMERICANA - PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO



In another example, the team researched the history of the site and its context to ensure the design vision for a new resort in Puerto Vallarta was relatable and unique in a saturated marketplace. “We looked for clues and uncovered the inherent hidden treasure within the site,” shares Patocchi. The theme was formulated around the ‘life of fishermen’, their daily interaction with the sea, and return home to a small coastal town. Guests begin their journey in a village square where the hotel is sited as a welcomed embrace of the ocean. Facing the sea, guests find their rooms within and among three buildings that represent a contemporary interpretation of old ships that appear to be stranded in the sand. Amenities are then concentrated around the boat inspired architecture in the heart of the property. The main pool represents an arm of the sea and connects to the village center. Event spaces, water park, bars, and restaurants are accessed through a recreated beach that emphasizes the theme. “When you have a strong concept, everything goes smoothly, and the detailing feels natural,” shares Patocchi.

Numerous studies have shown that creative teams that work and interact in an open, fluid network significantly increase their chances of these ‘lucky’ moments – where ideas seem to come easily. According to author Steven Johnson, this connection is what happened in the 18th century’s coffeehouses in Europe. Communal spaces allowed different perspectives, experiences, and areas of expertise to be shared – which created a fertile environment for innovation that ultimately led to the period of Enlightenment.

Today, the accessibility of data through technology is shaping the visioning process and how alternatives are evaluated in compelling ways. “For example, Infracore and other three-dimensional modeling software allows our team to quickly synthesize multiple sources of data to test ideas and visualize things that you would never be able to in a two-dimensional plan. This reduces up-front costs for clients and provides a greater understanding of topography, slopes, viewsheds, and other physical features of a site in relation to the proposed building program. We can then focus on the aesthetics and storyline – bringing everything together. Not only do you see the big picture but with a program like Infracore, you can see the right picture,” explains Propes.



We begin the ideation process free of semantics as to why an idea won't work. We let go of harsh judgments and allow all ideas – brilliant, mediocre, and outrageous to flow through our minds. In the end, some ideas are not going to be viable, but others will be astonishing.



Carrying the Torch of Creativity

Generating original ideas requires communication, talent alignment and collaboration. The EDSA team knows this cannot all be accomplished by non-stop work. Instead, everyone makes time for fun as this opens the mind and stimulates the free thought necessary to drive innovation. The Joseph J. Lalli Fellowship, Edward D. Stone Travel Program, an annual retreat, and lunch & learns all help drive this innovation by providing opportunities to gain exposure to new and different touchpoints and view design from different perspectives. With a truly explorative mind, employees can gain a broader orientation of the world and collect inspiration from a wide range of art forms – from fashion, architecture and history to nature, music and beyond.

While at the time, there may be no immediate application to a project's design, these insights and continuous engagement in design discussions serve as analogies from which to draw from when visioning in the future. Just like Gutenberg in 1450 combined insights from wine-pressing and his profession as a goldsmith to come up with a printing system that led to the first assembly line-style mass production of books. Gagne recalls, "We still cite our Studio trip – finding commonalities of what excited us and how we can apply them to new design challenges."

"The deliverable in all of this is a visioning book – an accumulation of all the design ideas – an advertisement for the experience we are creating and what will draw people to a place. The process and outcome solidify how all of the pieces of the design unite to tell the story," states Gagne. Patocchi agrees. "Everyone loves art. Everyone loves nature," she says. "Great ideas lie at the intersection of these commonalities and that excites us. We are all stakeholders when it comes to seeking inspiration and we are likewise empowered, with our own creativity, to keep the design conversation alive."

ERIC PROPE, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL



FROM SHOPPING TO SOCIAL

RETAIL'S CONTEMPORARY TRANSFORMATION

If retail spaces don't keep pace with marketplace trends, they risk being left behind. At that point, fewer options are available for adapting the existing space to its highest, best purpose.

GREGG SUTTON, PRINCIPAL

While news headlines have reported on a 'retail apocalypse' and 'retail meltdown', the business reality shaping the future of this industry is really about transformation. Consumer spending is increasing and shifting among multiple channels. This, combined with shoppers looking for new experiences on their path to purchase is a clear indication that the retail sector must continue to evolve.

"Retail is changing rapidly with transactions accounting for only a small portion of multi-sensory happenings at today's popular venues," shares EDSA Principal Gregg Sutton. "With the need for engaging experiences, the challenge is bringing new vitality to locations that historically focused on maximizing product inventory." This trend has caused many retail landlords and property owners to actively pursue redevelopment and re-concepting of their spaces. Remaining consumer-focused and attracting a diverse mix of businesses (i.e., dining, theatres, bowling alleys, arcades, outdoor concert venues, parks, even family fun parks) now figures prominently into the scene.

At the end of 2017, Jones Lang LaSalle Capital (JLL) published a report examining 90 major shopping malls across the US. Their findings suggested that an overwhelming majority of these retail centers were either amid a makeover, had recently completed such an overhaul, or were planning redevelopment. Revamping of common areas was the top investment, but integration of new technology, repurposing of store spaces, and other design expansions also ranked. JLL estimated that since 2014, the malls included in the survey had collectively spent more than \$8 billion in renovations, with no signs of slowing any time soon.



LAKE NONA TOWN CENTER - ORLANDO, FLORIDA

"All responsible property owners that undertake sizable capital improvements do so because the short and long-term cost-benefit is favorable," asserts Sutton. "If retail spaces don't keep pace with marketplace trends, they risk being left behind. At that point, fewer options are available for adapting the existing space to its highest, best purpose." Whether making improvements to infrastructure, building facades, circulation, or overall aesthetics, blending opportunities for social interaction within the retail environment for a new experience is crucial.

EDSA Associate Principal Marc Hall, hints at some of the other challenges facing traditional sticks-and-bricks retailers. The first being that an 'all-at-once' reformation is a luxury many property owners cannot financially afford. In addition, square footage is being added everywhere in new developments, at the ground floor of apartment towers, and as part of most downtown revitalization projects. "The danger to a traditional mall or shopping center is that a full closure, even if only temporary, may result in the loss of tenants who either cannot or will not wait for a renovation to be completed. As planners, we need to bridge the gap between 'then' and 'now' in ways that are scalable, yet meaningful to modern consumers."

What's on the Horizon?

If the retail destinations of the past three decades are no longer the standard – then what is it that consumers truly want? Various surveys conducted by Simon Property Group have shown that 20% of malls are now allocating space to the community as green lawns, kid zones, al-fresco dining patios, and outdoor amphitheaters.

In La Vista, Nebraska, rather than following a set of safe but boring rules, EDSA cleverly reimagined the most banal of building types – the strip mall. “The results are exciting. The fact that they have leased space in an unsteady economic climate demonstrates that good design is always a good business practice,” says Hall. The area was no stranger to commerce, but over the years, it had fallen out of favor with locals and visitors. EDSA was tasked with making the spot an ‘it’ destination again by developing a fluid experience with self-sustaining appeal. “In speaking with the community, we found that the mall lacked continuity and was very one-dimensional. Once people had exhausted the shops available, there was no reason to stay or return. We had to change that.” With a form-based retail experience, the architecture now has a direct relationship and visibility to the street. Set-backs, parallel parking, and promenade courtyards spill out from storefronts establishing a hub of activity. Garages are hidden behind buildings and a public park anchors the end of the main retail street.

Deciding to make such a shift takes a great deal of vision and cooperation between municipal leaders, retailers, and consumers who use the space. “It is the designer’s responsibility to create solutions that answer each stakeholder’s needs, equally. In doing so, this retail destination not only exceeded initial expectations, but has become a catalyst for future growth,” explains Hall.

Another way retail property owners are successfully finding common ground with customers is by adding new technologies and infrastructure improvements. From free high-speed Wi-Fi, digitally guided parking, and interactive touch-screen maps – to water-bottle refill stations, and pet-friendly zones, retailers have recaptured public interest simply by eliminating common ‘pain’ points. Smart parking systems, like the patented Park Assist® currently in operation at the FIGat7th open-air shopping plaza in Downtown Los Angeles, streamlines traffic flow, reduces parking time, and automates access and payment functions. In a city like Los Angeles that is known for traffic congestion, FIGat7th made an incremental, but very important improvement.

“For retail spaces that need only a small lift, smart investments in amenities can achieve big results without the allocation of a large budget,” suggests Kona Gray, EDSA Principal. “One of the ways we’re changing the conversation with our clients is inviting them to start with the end in mind. If the desired outcome is a higher price per square foot and consistent foot traffic, then that becomes our benchmark for all decisions.” Research has shown that the more time people spend at a retail destination, the more likely they are to make a purchase and per transaction spending also increases. “The visit can’t be solely about buying goods or services. Retail destinations must establish relationships with consumers and build loyalty through experiences that generate return visitation.”

The phenomenon Gray refers to is a relatively recent concept called ‘Slow Shopping’ which is designed to capture the shoppers’ growing preferences for experiences. “People want to be where they see other people enjoying themselves,” explains Gray. “Bringing those experiential moments forward and making them front and center to the retail destination is an important shift in how spaces are programmed and used. From a design perspective, it entails creating ‘pockets’ for personalized, immersive experiences where consumers ‘opt-in’ to the purchasing community.”



La Vista City Centre - LA VISTA, NEBRASKA

A vacant shopping center is replaced with approximately 350 apartments, 200,000 square-feet of retail, dining and entertainment offerings, 100,000 square-feet of lofted office space, and a boutique hotel.



Lifestyle Center Priorities



Upgrade infrastructure



Enhance circulation and access points



Improve overall aesthetics



Create family-oriented community spaces



Integrate technology



RUYI SHOPPING MALL - HAIKOU, CHINA



SoLÉ MIA - NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA

The remediated site will include 4,390 high-rise residences, a 150-room hotel, 37-acre public park, and SoLé Mia Mainstreet, a vibrant town center with 1,400,000 square-feet of lifestyle shopping, restaurants, markets, entertainment venues, and office space.



Location. Location. Location.

The future of physical shopping is about creating a compelling destination and a location-specific experience to re-enchante the public. No longer focused on the transaction, developers are creating inspiring, interactive, immersive environments with an iconic draw that engages the senses and gives consumers a reason to linger. For example, Bluewaters in Dubai has the entertainment wheel. Poised as one of the world's largest tourism hotspots, the 1.6 billion-dollar, mixed-use destination contains distinctive retail, residential, hospitality, and entertainment zones in addition to a featured centerpiece, Ain Dubai, the world's largest observation wheel. EDSA supported the retail environment with a series of amusement avenues and promenades that create an interconnected walkable flow to smart living and leisure alternatives.

Likewise, for the Mission Hills Town Center in Haikou, EDSA developed a landscape narrative that melds the site's unique features with the region's geography. Programmed with more than 50,000 square meters of bars, restaurants, and performance spaces, the pioneering entertainment center is fashioned around a former 35-acre quarry which serves as a visual centerpiece for sweeping water and light shows that activate the site. The lake edge takes cues from the natural quarry stone where it is sectioned, layered into walls, stacked horizontally, or set on its end for a mix of planting buffers, dining terraces, and front row seating to entertainment.

Retail destinations must establish relationships with consumers and build loyalty through experiences that generate return visitation.

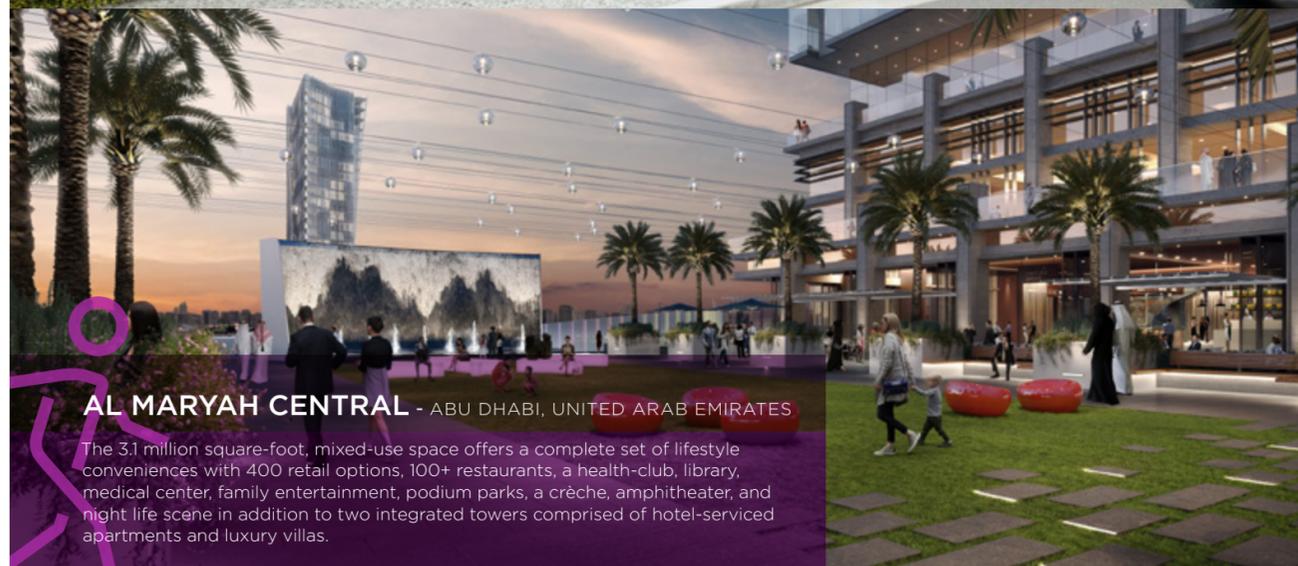
KONA GRAY, PRINCIPAL



BLUEWATERS - DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



MISSION HILLS TOWN CENTER - HAIKOU, CHINA



AL MARYAH CENTRAL - ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The 3.1 million square-foot, mixed-use space offers a complete set of lifestyle conveniences with 400 retail options, 100+ restaurants, a health-club, library, medical center, family entertainment, podium parks, a crèche, amphitheater, and night life scene in addition to two integrated towers comprised of hotel-serviced apartments and luxury villas.



METROPICA - SUNRISE, FLORIDA

Alternative Revenue Streams

Retail venues cannot survive without multiple revenue streams. With food, beverage, and entertainment being more profitable, the formula must include eat, meet, and drink offerings. “Without good public spaces and alternative offerings, you’re relying entirely on the quality of the shops, and very few places can survive on that alone,” expresses Sutton. This is where form and function play a role in enhancing the pedestrian experience. Consider walkability and parking conveniences as well as points of interest and spaces for respite. “How will people move through a space? What will they see? What will make it interesting for a visitor to travel from point A to B? The design must focus on human scalability, hierarchy of spaces, and give people a purpose for being there.” Plazas, seating nooks, water features, pop-up containers, interactive art, gardens, and other amenities that are joined by linear connections make socialization, relaxation, and shopping easy.

At Al Maryah Central in Abu Dhabi, EDSA created synergies among a series of well-connected, diverse experiences. The 3.1 million square feet of mixed-use space effectively melds retail, residential, and hospitality. The design emphasizes walkability and discovery incorporating shading and cooling elements that create comfortable spaces and solve climatic conditions. The engaging environment offers 400 retail options, 100+ restaurants, a health-club, public library, medical center, podium parks, and a vibrant nightlife scene. An open-air, rooftop food hall, multi-screen cinema, crèche, and outdoor amphitheater are defining entertainment draws. “All programming decisions were deliberate – intended to get people to stay and make a day long experience out of it,” shares Sutton.

In another example, Tanger Daytona in Florida breaks the outlet mall mold. Using the highly visible location for design inspiration, the aesthetic styling is a combination of beach-industrial and mid-century modern where branded stores, that accentuate the perimeter, are connected by a series of outdoor walkways and plazas. Ingress and egress are enhanced with four standout entryways showcasing unique paving patterns, plantings, and lighting schemes. Media lounges, outdoor living rooms, cabanas, lighted sitting swings, and a shaded trellis create points of convergence. A step plaza with light box seating, an interactive cone structure, splash pad playground, and central water fountain contribute to the village form and invite families. “Focused on place, experience, and convenience, our design integrates a strong landscape theme and business strategy to draw iconic tenants and create a social setting for all shoppers.” Gray continues, “if you don’t make it enjoyable for people to stay and relax, you’re missing the point!”



TANGER OUTLETS DAYTONA

DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

With rising occupancy rates, the new 300,000 square-foot entertainment complex has more than 70 shops and eateries. An icon in the community, the retail destination continues to draw record visitors with programmed events including the Fun Festival, Summer Splash, and a Fall Concert Series in partnership with Latitude Margaritaville.

It’s less about inventory and more about the act of shopping where demo-based locations provide ‘grab and go’ opportunities to interface and experience a product before purchase.

MARC HALL, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

Moving Beyond

In 1998, CNN reported that the number of retailers with e-commerce sites jumped 25%, up from 6% in 1996 – numbers that seem staggeringly low by today’s standards. 1998 was also the year that the Chicago Tribune felt Amazon.com was unproven as it had yet to turn a profit. Fast forward to today where retail destinations must continually compete with the instant gratification offered by online experiences.

“But don’t count brick and mortar retailers out yet. While there are conveniences to online shopping, it does not fulfill the human need for people to gather,” says Hall. Consumers prefer lifestyle centers where they can interact with others, spend money, and hang out. In response, the footprint for new store openings is morphing to integrate digital and face-to-face experiences with an intuitive customer experience that makes buying products quicker, easier, and more enjoyable. “It’s less about inventory and more about the act of shopping where demo-based locations provide ‘grab and go’ opportunities to interface and experience a product.” Everything from running shoes to cookware, retail business models are embracing this presentation model over inventory. For example, at Al Maryah Central there is a bike course where potential buyers can cycle up and down hills and ride through obstacles before making a purchase.

Just like everything else, the world of retail is ever-changing. Focusing on what’s new, now and next, means investing in destinations that generate excitement, discovery, and build strong communities. It’s no longer just about the ‘buy’, just as a sporting event is no longer about the score. It’s about the destination, the atmosphere, the food, the people, and the experience.



MADINAT JUMEIRAH - DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



AFTER A DEVASTATING 2017 HURRICANE SEASON,
THE CARIBBEAN IS REBUILDING AND REVITALIZING
MULTIPLE PROPERTIES.

ISLAND

STRONG

Made up of more than 7,000 islands, the beauty and splendor of the unspoiled Caribbean is situated in the crosshairs of extreme weather. Plagued with some of the strongest hurricanes on record, recent storms brought severe wind, rain and coastal surge damage to many islands – collapsing infrastructure, electricity and communications.

When hurricanes Irma and Maria swept through the Caribbean, the world watched as these massive storms devastated multiple islands with a combined force that took hundreds of lives. Twelve major islands were affected by the Category 5 hurricanes with Anguilla, Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Puerto Rico, St. Martin, and the U.S. Virgin Islands taking the biggest hits. But like the islands themselves, many of the 4.2 million people who live in the Caribbean are resilient.

While impacts, much like authentic Caribbean culture and character, vary from one island to another, the tourism-dependent region is rebuilding – and in many cases, stronger than before. “We’re seeing a significant amount of homegrown and foreign investment in the Caribbean and an uptick in development projects that not only encourage tourism, but improve daily life on the islands,” shares EDSA Associate Principal Courtney Moore. “With a resurgence in hotel rehabilitations and new mixed-use residential properties on the rise, our team is concentrating on designing hurricane-resilient projects to withstand severe weather by addressing infrastructure and agriculture, adhering to code regulations, and mitigating the impacts of natural disasters by putting effective storm management practices in place.”

REDEVELOPMENT PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY THAT REACHES BEYOND THE CONFINES OF A HOTEL TO LINKAGES BETWEEN TOURISM RELATED SERVICES AND THEIR IMPACT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, POVERTY ALLEVIATION, AND THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE.

BOB DUGAN - PRINCIPAL

REBUILDING THE FUTURE OF THE CARIBBEAN

With the reconstruction of many coastal destinations underway, owners and operators are opting to bring properties and their surroundings up-to-date. “Redevelopment presents an opportunity that reaches beyond the confines of a hotel to linkages between tourism related services and their impact on sustainable development, poverty alleviation, and the conservation of nature,” says Bob Dugan, EDSA Principal. Recent shifts in travel patterns, markets, and motivations are bringing considerable growth and dramatic changes to the region. “Visitors’ expectations are higher now and the need to address global trends and regional conditions is guiding why and how development happens.”

EDSA Associate Principal Craig Stoner agrees. More than 25 million travelers were visiting the Caribbean annually and contributing nearly \$37 billion to island economies. “This is an opportunity to reevaluate properties and get them back in the market with improved social, economic, and environmental capacity.” For the 144-key Ritz-Carlton Club in St. Thomas, EDSA not only refurbished and updated planting palettes and site furnishings, designers brought a fresh look to pools that hadn’t been touched in more than fifteen years. “The upgrades reflect a return to a more intimate, casually elegant feel with defined sustainability parameters that work with nature rather than against it.” Utilizing storm resilient landscape materials, planning for surge zones and rising tides, along with an aesthetic consideration for the uniqueness of the site, the design more appropriately responds to context, climate, culture, and community.

EDSA is also working to redevelop the central administration facilities in Kingston, Jamaica. The Jamaican government is leading this extensive revitalization effort to improve public realm and create new development initiatives. Through a series of corridor improvements and urban core enhancements, the design creates a functional environment to encourage public-private partnerships and support construction of underutilized and vacant sites. At completion, the downtown area will have a government campus, national museum, parks and open space, commercial and residential offerings, festival plazas, and hotels. According to Dugan, “the master plan is helping fulfill the government’s roadmap for making Jamaica ‘the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business’ – with a design that retains the city’s true character and brings enhanced functionality, accessibility, and safety to the urban core.”

KIMPTON SEAFIRE RESORT + SPA - GRAND CAYMAN, CAYMAN ISLANDS

HARBORSIDE RESORT AT ATLANTIS - PARADISE ISLAND, BAHAMAS

KNOW YOUR CARIBBEAN FLAVOR:

SOURSOP

A large, spiny, heart shaped fruit commonly used in many sorbets and drinks.



PRESERVING THE AUTHENTICITY OF A PLACE AND USING THE EXISTING NATURAL BEAUTY AS A CATALYST FOR INSPIRATION MAKES A PROJECT SPECIAL.

CRAIG STONER - ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

While EDSA's legacy project of Atlantis, Paradise Island is credited for its innovative design, assistance in reversing tourism decline, and improving employment opportunities, Moore says, "it is the lesser-known projects that create relationships with the region and resonate with residents." While living in Anguilla as part of a one-year construction administration contract with the Four Seasons Resort and Residences, Moore engrossed himself in the lifestyle of the quaint island. "Distractions from modern technology didn't exist, so my immersive experience came from offshore snorkeling, diving colorful reefs, and playing softball with locals. We listened to the residents – learned and drew from their experiences to create a destination that made the most sense." As a result, the less dense, more organic character of outdoor spaces and siting details of amenities add a level of visual charm that preserves the essence of Anguilla.

With pristine beaches, biodiverse marine environments, and hundreds of species of indigenous flora and fauna, the authentic Caribbean experience has a sense of detaching oneself from the frantic hustle and bustle of the world and reconnecting with nature. "Preserving the authenticity of a place and using the existing natural beauty as a catalyst for inspiration makes a project special," suggests Stoner. "We have these beautiful habitats – why go in and do too much when it's already precious?"

SHAPING THE LAND: AUTHENTICITY PRESERVED IN THE CARIBBEAN

Shortly after the firm's founding in 1960, EDSA began working in the Caribbean – designing and implementing noteworthy resorts, residential communities, tourist centers, mixed-use environments, and marine-oriented destinations. Having completed over 250 assignments in the region, the firm has representative work in almost every country and territory with an essence for benchmarking successful practices that preserve and promote an island context, character, and lifestyles that residents, tourists, and investors have come to expect and enjoy. "We've taken to heart our experiences with local developers, government agencies, and hospitality flags. The return is a strong understanding of regulatory and permitting compliance along with construction techniques and methods that are customary in the region, as well as what it means to be operationally sustainable," submits Dugan.



KNOW YOUR CARIBBEAN FLAVOR: FLAME TREE

A royal poinsettia, this native tree is known for its beautiful crown of orange and vibrant red flowers, and can be found all over the Caribbean.

One such project is the Kimpton Seafire Resort & Spa in Grand Cayman, which contributed more than four percent of the country's GDP at peak construction and created nearly 400 jobs. The design pays tribute to classic Caymanian culture with an authentic aesthetic and sophisticated, yet playful amenities. Taking care to protect the island's natural wonders, sustainability is woven throughout the site with open-air architecture, solar panels, and eco-friendly materials that utilize natural elements to maximize energy efficiency. In addition, the resort's 266 hotel rooms and 62 residences have been pushed back 140 feet, out of the storm zone of concern, with only secondary and tertiary building uses reachable by storm surge. In addition, Caymanian stone walls are creatively sited to help break storm surge but not completely contain it.

JUST AS EACH ISLAND IS DIFFERENT, WE ARE ENSURING EVERY PROJECT HAS ITS OWN SUSTAINABLE IDENTITY. THERE'S PLENTY OF EXPERIENCES WAITING TO BE UNCOVERED IN THE CARIBBEAN.

COURTNEY MOORE - ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

STORM-RESILIENT LANDSCAPES: EVOLVING DESIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

As landscape architects, engineers, and developers revisit the Caribbean for projects, industry professionals are reassessing their approaches. With the right multi-disciplinary team of experts, design can serve as a steward for the wise use of natural resources and protection against storm damage in the future. "Your eyes have to be open to the fact that we must build smarter, better, and stronger. Let us learn what we need to do from the forensics of storm damage," Dugan insists. "It is only then, that we can produce projects that are more visually exciting, operationally safe and functional, resilient in the face of the next storm, economically diverse, and supportive of long-term sustainability."

When approaching a new project or rehabilitation, designers must focus on creating outdoor environments to withstand stronger storms and sea level rise. Other considerations include advanced water use strategies and re-tooling of buildings to improve water storage, in addition to repowering with natural gas and underground utilities. "Design choices are very important as environmental issues increasingly impact quality of life in the region," adds Stoner.

For the Ritz-Carlton Reserve at Caroline Bay in Bermuda, EDSA's design started at the water's edge and worked backwards to the main lobby and guest rooms. Creating an iconic mixed-use landmark, the plan transforms a derelict US Naval brownfield, waterfront site into a highly desirable destination with special attention to shoreline protection in an effort to reduce flooding and reposition infrastructure. Anchored by a signature hotel, the branded residences are supported by a world-class spa, retail, marina, conference center, and kids club. The design reflects a modern interpretation of Bermuda vernacular while natives and exotic plantings that frame walking and cycling trails offer a glimpse into Bermuda's natural flora and fauna.

Similarly, EDSA is aiding in the repositioning of the Four Seasons Resort in Nevis. The firm's initial involvement dates back to early 2000 with the design team contributing to several expansions and revitalizations over the years. Currently, redesign of the 140-hectare property includes enhancements to the arrival sequence, overall circulation, and amenity areas. These recent improvement strategies preserve the design integrity of the resort with the proper use of scale, texture, patterns, and a storm-resistant landscape palette. Central to the latest renovation is a complete redesign and rebuild of the main pool whose sleek, contemporary forms and higher elevation direct views over beach dunes. The arrival pier and plaza are also being updated with a new fire and water feature. Generous use of local volcanic stone, a flagstone path network, and stronger landscape forms create a statement experience that closely ties to the island.



THE OCEAN CLUB,
A FOUR SEASONS RESORT -
PARADISE ISLAND, BAHAMAS



THE COVE, A RITZ-CARLTON RESERVE RESIDENCE -
CAROLINE BAY, BERMUDA

KNOW YOUR CARIBBEAN FLAVOR: SCARLETT IBIS

One of the two national birds of Trinidad and Tobago, its brilliant red plumage is said to come from pigments in the bodies of crustaceans on which it feeds.



In addition to aesthetic enhancements, the design team is helping make the resort more resilient. New stone garden walls, at each ground floor guestroom, not only add privacy but protect the low-lying buildings from storm surges. The resort is also utilizing earthwork improvements such as detention basins, erosion control structures, and a system of new berms to reduce the chance that floodwaters will reach important structures. In a major storm event, these systems will capture water and direct it safely around the resort. In addition, enhanced breakwaters help protect the shore and have already aided in reversing beach erosion. Taken together, these strategies position the Four Seasons Nevis to better withstand future storms.

For decades, the appeal of the Caribbean has been a mosaic – a colorful and fascinating assortment of traditions and people that play out daily in individual streetscapes, marketplaces, beaches, and seaside locales. Each island has staked its own claim to a particular facet of the region's beauty – never seeing other islands as competition but rather partners in painting a picture of enjoyment that deepens with people's exploration of each new destination.

With no shortage of locations for new development and availability of financing for rehabilitation, opportunities in the Caribbean are plentiful. EDSA remains committed to designing unique outdoor environments for residents and travelers in their continual discovery of the wonders each unique island holds. "Just as each island is different, we are ensuring every project has its own sustainable identity," says Moore. "There's plenty of experiences still waiting to be uncovered in the Caribbean. It's a new beginning."



raw adventure

CARICOM RESORT -
Georgetown, Guyana

The juxtaposition of expansive landscapes, forested jungle surroundings and vibrant colors of the lake creates a unique sense of drama where rare experiences can unfold.



Storytelling has transcended beyond libraries and movie theatres into the fabric of our everyday lives. Shapes, images, and technologies previously only imagined are now seen in expressions of art, architecture, and even automobiles. In doing so, engaging and provoking design is redefining the meaning and connection among and between people and place.

IMMERSIVE

DESIGN

As society seeks more enriching experiences, the task has fallen to designers to concept these immersive environments and bring them into being. "Every project must connect with its users in some way," says Andrew Schmidt, EDSA Senior Associate. This type of design narrative evolves from an exploration of the client's mission, the site's context, and often its unique place in history. "That's the heart of it," exclaims Schmidt. "Design that fits within a place and out of respect for it – becomes transformative." Editing a project vision into a simple theme and then expanding it into a complete story creates a fulfilling experience with materiality, structure, and detailing becoming the vehicles that impart the message.

Case in point, the country of Guyana – where the EDSA team recently conducted a design workshop. Since gaining its independence in 1966, the country's chief economic assets have been its natural resources and bauxite reserves. Despite these riches, Guyana remains one of the poorest countries in South America. "Once a productive mine, our client's site offers an opportunity to preserve history and ecology by designing a series of educational, cultural, and eco-tourism experiences," states Schmidt.

With limited infrastructure and land forms dictating its best uses and program compatibility, an existing lake will serve as a centerpiece for entertainment encircled by theme parks, water parks, and retail amenities. In contrast to this reclaimed parcel, lower level, undisturbed lands will house low-key hospitality and residential offerings while large berms provide the foundation for hiking paths, extreme sports, and equestrian trails. "With proper care of the existing topology, the story of the Caricom Resort can become an icon within the community while driving tourism and economic growth to the region."

Beyond visual aesthetics, immersive design incorporates sound, movement, and even fragrance. Relatable to all senses, it is intended to evoke emotion where textures, colors, and arrangements cross-thresholds. "Like a piece of music, design is intended to move us and make us feel a particular way," shares Astrid Hoffmann, a Vice President at EDSA. "Whether a design stands in the background or asserts itself in a bold way, it is the story within from which memories are made. In messaging however, the narrative of a place must not be too theoretical. It must acknowledge the roots of a place, be of quality, and require the observer to take moments to discover."



transformative healing

HOPE PARK AT BAPTIST MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER – Jacksonville, Florida

A symbolic representation of another step in the healing journey, the public space includes benches, 11 lily-like trellises and the “And I Still Rise” sculpture created by internationally acclaimed artist Konstantin Dimopoulos.



WHEN DESIGNING, WE DEVELOP A NARRATIVE OF THE WHY, NOT THE WHAT. WE THEN USE THE PERSONALITY, PASSION, AND DRAMA OF A SITE TO TELL A STORY, INFORM OUR DESIGN, AND ALLOW THE DETAILING TO CREATE RELATABLE SPECIFICS FOR PEOPLE.

ASTRID HOFFMANN, VICE PRESIDENT

INTENSE... NOT IMMENSE

Immersive design need not be vast in scope to be effective. “Scale and proportion play a large part in defining a space and elements must respond to dimension and human interface to create a welcome sense of belonging,” says Hoffmann. Understanding how many people will use a space and for what purpose triggers ideas that can make a space usable and unforgettable. “The proper height of a firepit for relaxation, the composition of a planting aggregate for drama, width and depth of stairs to create a sunken living room, or the arrangement and comfort of materials in site furnishings – this attention to detail outwardly expresses to the visitor, owner, or resident that a designer cared about the experience they would have with the space.”

At the Grand Palladium Costa Mujeres Resort & Spa in Mexico, EDSA used simple lines, patterns, and colors to create a dialog for guests. Symbolically inspired by the Goddess Ixchel, the harmonious design is that of modern luxury where nature and water are well integrated with an organically structured landscape and building forms. Hoffmann explains, “Upon entering any space, people are

not overwhelmed but given context for a digestible understanding of where they are within the property.” A series of canals flow throughout the site and along with lush gardens and regional vegetation create a series of pedestrian green paths and transitional spaces that support the design intent. A compilation of volumes, colors, and textures bring spatial scale and organization to outdoor spaces while the significance of light and shadows is reflected in the geometric use of jade, silver, blue, and white in polished stone, stucco, wood, and glass.

Every public space requires a different level of detailing to transform into a special place. For example, urban design can be bold and innovative because of the scale of a space, while resorts must address intimate engagements. Correspondingly, campuses need clarity for movement with attractiveness and walkability, whereas residential developments must consider accessibility to communal green spaces, amenities, and streets hierarchies in creating a sense of home.

DESIGN NARRATIVES

A few years ago, storyboard artist Emma Coats tweeted a series of ‘story basic’ guidelines that she used at Pixar to create gripping narratives. Much of her advice had to do with simplifying and focusing on essentials that had universal application. For example, #14: Why must you tell this story? What is the belief burning within you that the context feeds from? Hoffman explains, “When we begin the design process, we take everything we know about the people, climate, history, culture etc. and develop a narrative of the why, not the what. We then use the personality, passion, and drama of a site to tell a story, inform our design, and allow the detailing to fill in the specifics that become relatable and create a greater draw for people.”

EDSA Vice President Derick Cissel couldn’t agree more. He asserts that a designer’s goal is to create an attractive environment – attractive in the sense that people are compelled to spend time there because it provides a positive, interesting, and comfortable experience. “If we are successful at that, a user’s emotional attachment comes naturally.”

“When I think about my own impressionable experiences, there is always something visually powerful and distinct that anchors my memory to it,” advises Cissel. “Engaging outdoor spaces are a result of a designer getting inside the mind of the user and determining what will make the space memorable to them. This requires there to be something unique about the design – something that stands out. Quite frankly, this is a designer’s biggest challenges – to create a truly original composition.

In the case of Hope Park at Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, we were not only able to incorporate and showcase an original piece of art, we authored a site specific, one-of-a-kind, sculptural shade structure in partnership with Landscape Forms. These pieces will draw people into the space, compel them to stay, and inspire conversation.”



SMOTHERS PARK - OWENSBORO, KENTUCKY

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS ARE THE ONES THAT POSITIVELY CHANGE THE WAY PEOPLE VIEW DESIGN. TO ENSURE TRULY TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES, WE MUST, AS DESIGNERS, BE WILLING TO INFLUENCE CONSUMER TRENDS AS MUCH AS THESE TRENDS INFLUENCE OUR WORK.

DERICK CISSEL, VICE PRESIDENT

IN FOCUS

Schmidt warmly remembers advice he received from Joe Lalli, former EDSA President, “If everything is special, nothing is special.” Focal points capture the viewer’s attention and hold it, even if only for a second or two. They represent the aha moments – the stop and pause spaces that change behavior. Whether they occur naturally, or are created through hardscape and landscape, focal elements add a level of visual complexity needed in a sensible design. “Supporting the need for balance, unity, transition, and rhythm, the best focal points are the ones when viewed from different vantage points take on a completely different set of characteristics and preserve the essence of the site.”

At the Four Seasons Resort Dubai fountains, shade structures, and climatically appropriate planting palettes bring perspective, a sense of purpose, and order to the destination. Situated on a pristine beachfront, the resort blends Arabic design with cool, contemporary styling to create a light, sophisticated atmosphere. Characteristics of the Andalusian-styled architecture are mirrored in the landscape palette, private courtyards, and colorfully-tiled fountains. Created as an outdoor gallery, classic spatial proportions and contextual luxury develop as the landscape expands with various textures, shades, and forms. As guests transcend through the resort, sculptures and artwork emerge amidst lush gardens, communal spaces, and quiet areas for relaxation and reflection.



FOUR SEASONS RESORT DUBAI AT JUMEIRAH BEACH - DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

In addition to water features, sculptures, or tree canopies, something as simple as a bench or planter can become a focal point with the proper lighting or shading to enhance the ambiance created by such elements. Hoffmann adds, “Flexibility in design also gives users possibilities to create their own focal points.” Movable chairs like those found in Paris’s Luxembourg Gardens and New York City’s Bryant Park provide for a variety of perspective of the same space offering feelings of both intimacy and congregation.



unexplored luxury

GRAND PALLADIUM COSTA MUJERES RESORT & SPA - Cancun, Mexico

Offering a modern interpretation of sustainability, authenticity, and walkability a cohesive palette of shapes, patterns, textures, and forms create an active dialog between nature, space and guests.



ROSEWOOD CASTIGLION DEL BOSCO - TUSCANY, ITALY



AUTHENTICITY REDEFINED

While it is true that immersive design is often most easily accomplished when it draws upon natural surroundings, the true benchmark is believability within its own space. Think of the last time you visited a theme park. You know you're not in the Wild West, Medieval Europe, or turn-of-the-century Boston, but little or nothing shatters the illusion. In film-making and theatre they call this "The Willing Suspension of Disbelief". It is a contract between creator and audience that if conveyed with a spirit of authenticity, the message becomes the realm of reality for a period.

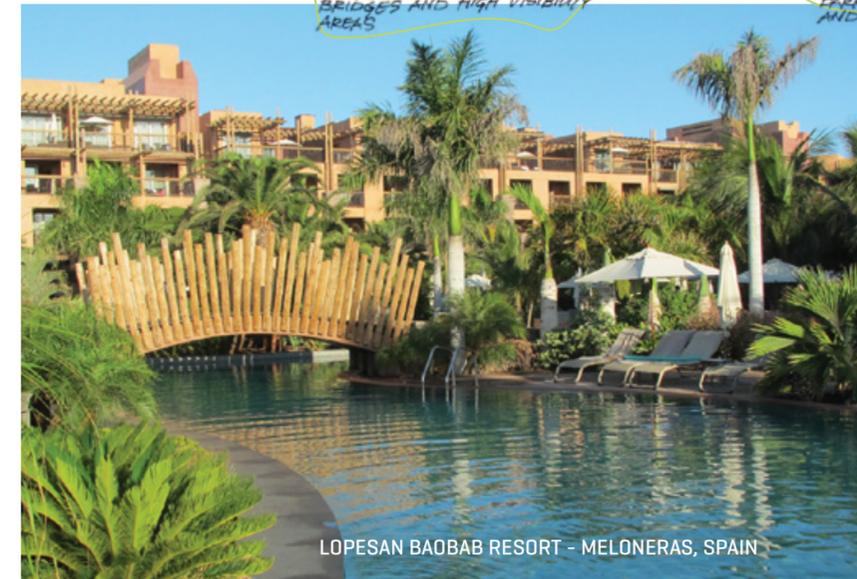
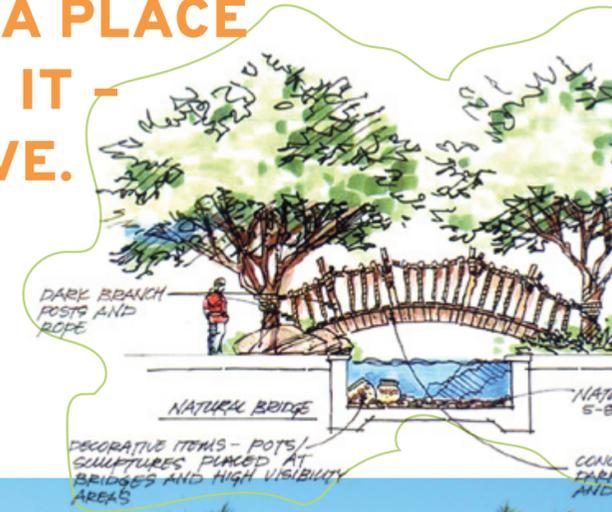
DESIGN THAT FITS WITHIN A PLACE AND OUT OF RESPECT FOR IT - BECOMES TRANSFORMATIVE.

ANDREW SCHMIDT, SENIOR ASSOCIATE

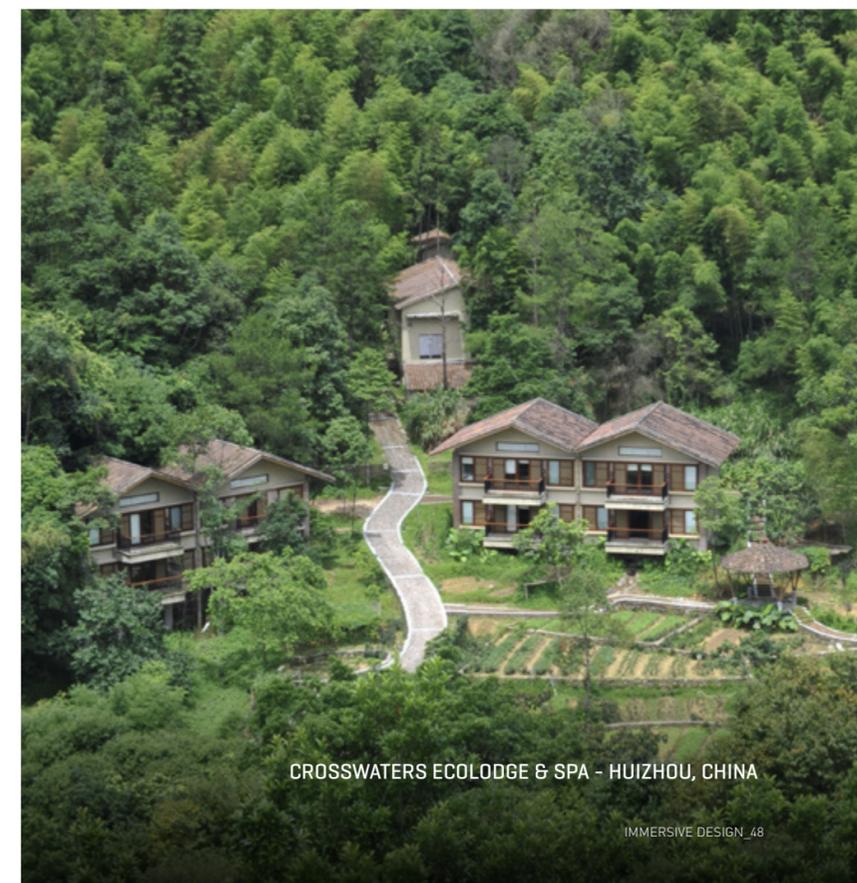
Immersive design is the same. EDSA's projects have invited people to explore the lost city of Atlantis, walk along cobblestone streets of a recreated historic old town, lose themselves in nature's embrace, or simply find respite in a carefully placed courtyard or welcoming pocket park. "In doing so, we've not only invigorated those places for purposes of commerce, entertainment, education, and wellness - we've also set in motion a story that will continue to grow, chapter by chapter, with each generation," suggests Schmidt.

Design is really an act of communication, which means having a deep understanding of the person with whom the designer is communicating. To tap into such encompassing concepts, designers must know the feeling of being immersed themselves. At EDSA, this is often accomplished through site visits during which the design team can explore and understand the uniqueness of a place. The project concept is then put through the rigors of 'what else' questioning. In some cases, the answers come from modern-day storytelling - devices and interactive technologies that sense and predict behavior or invite people to become part of the story. In other instances, the story itself leads, but the final design is carefully curated with a set of touchpoints that build upon one another for an immersive experience.

"The most successful projects are the ones that positively change the way people view design. Whether lusting for a cultural connection, enthralled by art in a public place, or the overarching movement of people searching for something new and different - we as designers, to ensure truly transformative experiences, must be willing to influence consumer trends as much as these trends influence our work," concludes Cissel.



LOPESAN BAOBAB RESORT - MELONERAS, SPAIN



CROSSWATERS ECOLOGDE & SPA - HUIZHOU, CHINA

BUOY



ASHLEY SCHWEMMER

MATTERS

THE EVOLUTION OF DUTCH WATER MANAGEMENT & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE'S ROLE

Waterfront cities across the globe are at risk to rising sea levels. Nonetheless, development practices have not dramatically changed to consider critical water issues and their impact on coastal systems. EDSA's 2017 Joseph J. Lalli Fellowship Recipient, Ashley Schwemmer, set out to study how changes in societal mindsets, government policies, and acceptance of alternative solutions are evolving. More importantly, Ashley delved into the ways cities and nations are currently addressing water management problems. Can design make a difference? At what scale and cost?

"We are powerless in addressing this dilemma without knowledge," Ashley begins. To gain answers and insights, she set her sights on The Netherlands. As a country, where 40 percent of the land is below sea level, they are ahead of the U.S. in both desperation and innovation regarding water management. A participant in the U.S. Netherlands Connection (USNC) program sponsored by the Florida Earth Foundation, Ashley toured programs and facilities connected to The Netherlands' Building with Nature Initiative, which has gained worldwide attention as an adaptive and resilient approach to sea level rise.

"The program gave me VIP access to major water infrastructure sites as well as interviews with government officials, operators, and engineers involved in The Netherlands' political and physical water management system." From their collective mindset, Ashley educated herself on the means, methods, and practices for protecting, rehabilitating, and resolving water management issues. "As landscape architects we are shaping how people experience the world and determining how development effects the natural environment. We must take our role seriously so that our projects become conduits for creating more resilient cities and landscapes."

THE JOSEPH J. LALLI FELLOWSHIP is an annual designation granted to an EDSA employee who presents a compelling proposal to travel and immerse themselves in a new culture in order to better understand the attributes of that place and its influence on design.





INFLUENCE OF PEOPLE AND PLACE

“Joining me on the journey, my colleagues ranged in occupational interests from policy, to ecology, to research. Helping shape my understanding of a landscape architect’s role in water management, these bright and passionate leaders shared the many variables that go into water management – from overarching political constructs that determine decision making methods, down to the micro-organisms in our streams that serve as indicators of a waterbody’s health. These topics, and almost everything in between, was discussed during our bus rides, meals, and down time. I could speak for hours on all I learned from these individuals, but my biggest, most important realization was the defining role landscape architects can play in bridging the gap between professionals, the public, and competing agendas.”

“Einstein once said, ‘the world would not be saved by science or technology but by human spirit’. I couldn’t agree more. However, we can only be effective if we take the time and have the sensibility to value the role each of us has in creating holistic solutions.”

Government leaders are now relying on civic and infrastructural landscapes to reconnect people to the water – bringing greater awareness to its threats and benefits.



OOSTERSCHELDE

NATIONAL PARK DE BIESBOSCH

MAKING OF THE LANDSCAPE

In early Dutch settlements, farmers were essentially the urban planners and architects of their communities. The organization and design of their towns was driven by practicality and function – but that is not to say they lacked innovation. Quite the opposite. Their evolution of living with water began with attempts to retreat from the shoreline by building hills known as terps and placing their communities atop them. They quickly outgrew this method, and from desperation came the beginning of their water management legacy. Building dikes, channeling water, and pumping it out created the necessary farmland for the Dutch to establish their country.

Over the centuries, the Dutch have lost a few battles with water. From manipulating water as a tool for profitable gains to treating it as a threat to be kept out at all costs, the Dutch have experienced the negative effects of overly simplified notions of water management. “Today, they welcome water as an ally, learning from the past, and realizing that they need to live with it rather than fight it. The country’s leaders have come to respect water as a resource that cannot and should not be engineered away. Their aim is to better understand the processes of the sea and rivers and become more synergetic in their solutions.”

With climate change bringing a new set of water dynamics and issues, the necessary approach requires individual behavioral change and decentralized efforts to effectively manage threats.



IJBURG FLOATING HOMES

“This paradigm shift has resulted in innovative projects that offer more than safety. Government leaders are now relying on civic and infrastructural landscapes to reconnect people to the water – bringing greater awareness to its threats and benefits.”

One of the first pioneering projects that resulted from this shift was Scheveningen Beach in 2013. Located in The Hague, the site holds significant cultural value, but the sea wall had weakened. The Delfland Water District saw this as an opportunity to not only repair the infrastructure but enhance the spatial quality of the coastal waterfront.

The solution incorporated the sea dike into the old dune embankment and placed the boulevard atop. As part of reinforcing the seawall, the beach was widened 40'-70' to absorb the force of the waves. Terraces, public boulevards, pavilions, and restaurants, now camouflaged by the sturdy dike, reconnect the community with the water.

“If any site tells the story of ‘The Netherlands’ evolving relationship with water, it is National Park De Biesbosch.” Originally a 300-kilometer polder that housed small farming villages, the lands were submerged in the St. Elizabeth flood forming a network of estuaries for the Rhine-Meuse. Slowly, over time, areas were reclaimed and turned into polders again. But after the Flood of 1953, the Delta Works projects again closed the area off to the rivers and ocean to control flooding, reclaiming even more land for farming. As a result, many of the thriving ecosystems within the Biesbosch disappeared and pollution became an issue.

As the result of environmental repercussions such as those caused by the Delta Works project, the government started the Room for the River Program. Under this program, a large part of the Biesbosch has returned to its original state. The interconnected network of rivers and creeks now function as a natural buffer to prevent major floods and lower the risk of high river levels. Additionally, the restored ecosystem has resulted in an expansion of many animal habitats.

“As we drifted through the Biesbosch’s estuaries on a tour boat, I never imagined the areas were anything but natural wetland – or that it had been drained and filled twice now. The engineering feats, forces of nature, and politics that have shaped this land are invisible and fascinating.”

Another pioneering effort that takes advantage of the country’s exorbitant amount of surface water is the famously featured IJburg floating homes. The framework for this community is built from banks, jetties, and the water, with two floating neighborhoods and a row of platform homes along the Dwarsslaan dike. Building on the water resolves the issue of rising water levels as these structures rise and fall with changing water levels. Additionally, these communities eliminate the need to maximize water volume for floods and stormwater overflow while connecting residents to the surroundings that make up their neighborhood. “The master planning efforts that went into this development were groundbreaking for its time. In a way, it was the city’s first experience with community informed planning, as well as their first project executed as a coalition between traditionally opposing forces – the city’s development agenda and the ecological agenda.”

EDUCATE. INCORPORATE. ADVOCATE.

One of the most anticipated stops on Ashley's trip was the Water Square Bentheplein in Rotterdam. The Water Square originated as a multi-functional urban space that happens to also collect, treat, and temporarily store water during heavy rains. Piloted by De Urbanensten, rainwater from parking lots and adjacent roofs collects in shallow basins. During heavy rain events, water releases into a third court basin through a weir creating a water wall. "Following a path of gullies, I was able to understand how different elements transported the rainwater to, from, in, and around the site." After the rain stops, the water is slowly released into the ground or flows to nearby canals. With a capacity to hold 1.7 billion liters of water, the colors, circulation, and signage clearly communicate that this space serves a larger purpose.

"This project is an excellent example of how cities can use urban spaces to manage water while simultaneously creating quality public spaces. The hope is that with a heightened awareness of how quality water management yields multiple benefits, a stronger community interest and investment in water management will result – ultimately influencing our cities to become more resilient and efficient with water resources."

If a project does not provide spaces and amenities desired by the public, no one will use it, and the catalyst effect will not ignite. Inviting the public to join the conversation on water management elevates infrastructural project outcomes in the public realm that provide social equity. In the instance of the Water Square Bentheplein, students, teachers, members of a youth theater, and neighborhoods were able to see their ideas come to fruition. This proved that outreach, through private partnerships and public engagement is key to planning and developing more resilient water management practices.

"Taking the time to discover the dynamics of a community and allowing that community to contribute ideas on what they need and want is a powerful tool in obtaining municipal acceptance and encouraging community support."

THE FUTURE.

Water management issues are inevitable as oceans are expected to rise between 11 and 38 inches by 2100, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The Dutch are capitalizing on this global need and investing in their complex water context through collaboration and data collection. The governmental water management branch recognizes that marrying engineering strategies with landscape architecture is beneficial to the security, financial viability, and community well-being of their country. In turn, their ability to export their findings and solutions to other coastal cities and nations has proven to be ecologically, socially, and economically beneficial.

Water-conscious development is an advancing trend and serves to improve knowledge of solutions that mitigate flooding, provide social amenities, and add valuable ecological benefits in high demand. "If we are to make an impact on development, we must educate, incorporate, and advocate project-based solutions for our cities' water issues. And, with climate change bringing on a new set of dynamics and issues, the necessary approach will require behavioral change and decentralized efforts to effectively manage its threats."

"Designers need to take multi-beneficial and multi-functional to another level to catalyze a paradigm shift in how we manage water and other resources. It is not that we don't have the knowledge or the means – we don't yet have the collective mindset. As the Dutch have done, let us use the landscape as a medium to educate and unite the public around the issues and opportunities of water management," concludes Ashley.

If we are to make an impact on development, we must educate, incorporate, and advocate project-based solutions for our cities' water issues.



2020 SEEING

During the past year, EDSA has grown in staff, celebrated project milestones, continued to create lasting partnerships, and shared insights on trending topics. Here are some of our favorite social media posts including our thought leadership viewpoints and corporate initiatives.

01/ GRAND OPENINGS

April marked the grand opening of Atlantis Sanya in China. The 62-hectare destination includes the Aquaventure Waterpark, exotic marine exhibits, and incredible dining experiences amidst a 1,300-key luxury resort. Adjacent to the hotel and waterpark are two apartment towers, oceanfront estate villas, and detached single-family homes all interconnected by open green spaces and community areas. Also celebrating grand openings were Vinhomes Central Park (Vietnam), Lopesan Costa Bavao Resort Spa & Casino (Dominican Republic), Atria at Villages of Windsor (USA) and Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Atlantic City (USA).



02/ DRIVERLESS CARS

The impact of autonomous vehicles extends beyond the driver/passenger experience to the world of design and urban planning. This technology will unlock and repurpose prime real estate into livable spaces, more usable public realm, and other opportunities for street-level engagement.

03/ ICE CREAM SOCIAL

You scream, I scream, we all scream for ice cream! EDSA celebrated National Ice Cream Month with sprinkles, fudge, and endless chocolate chips as part of a pop-up ice cream sundae bar.



04/ GROWING LEADERS

Continuing our legacy of leadership, EDSA announced the promotions of 11 talented designers. Congratulations Joanna, Robert, Xitong, Misha, Laura, Gabi, Tyler, Lianying, Jeong, Craig, and Yun!



05/ SAVANNAH STREETSCAPES

Prioritizing pedestrians as a focus of streetscape design results in projects that respond to community context, preserve character-defining elements, and bring economic and environmental benefits to urban areas. In the Historic Downtown District of Savannah, Georgia, EDSA reintroduced walkability, enhanced pedestrian circulation and accessibility, and incorporated aesthetic elements as a viable means of creating a more livable, walkable, and healthier community.



06/

06/ SHANGHAI STUDIO EXPANSION

EDSA strengthened its foothold in the region with a newly expanded Shanghai office. With nearly 60 active projects in Asia, the China-based studio is reinforcing our commitment to quality design and local expertise.



07/ ETCH A SKETCHING

An artistic outlet, EDSA employees celebrated Etch-A-Sketch Day with a fun challenge that put their creative skills to the test.

08/ LIVE. WORK. PLAY

Creating and maintaining inclusive, healthy, functional, and productive cities is perhaps the greatest challenge facing humanity today. Governments, municipalities, and private investors must respond with dynamic public realms that attract and best serve diversely evolving communities. Through an intelligent, insightful mix of residential, commercial, recreation, and educational offerings, cities can be reinvigorated – and developed into animated urban outdoor oases.



09/

NEXT GENERATION

As highlighted in an issue of Landscape Architecture Magazine, interns have been an integral part of EDSA since Ed Stone founded the firm in 1960. In 2018, 35 interns joined the EDSA family assimilating into a studio team, working on projects with real impact, and learning the business of landscape architecture through one-on-one mentorship.

10/

PERFORMANCE-BASED DESIGN

Our performance-based thinking approach recognizes the interdependence of human activities, natural systems, and environmentally healthy outcomes. Encouraging an evolution in thought, we continue to collect measurable data and create predictable outcomes to guide the functional aspects of master planning and landscape architecture – placing emphasis on an inclusive, integrative approach to sustainability.

11/

AMERICA'S FAVORITE PASTIME

Visitors to the Ballpark of the Palm Beaches are greeted by a tropical landscape with compelling features that focus on the fan experience, team interaction, and social engagement. Grounded in green technology, EDSA's design of the host venue for the Houston Astros and Washington Nationals plays up the notion of undulating landscapes of different scales with axial views, palm-lined streets, water features, pedestrian bridges, and a central plaza.



13/

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

EDSA's design detailing on Bluewaters Island in Dubai is taking shape. The 1.6 billion-dollar, man-made, mixed-use destination combines shopping, living, entertaining, and public realm amenities with a series of interconnected promenades. Among more than 20 notable works under construction are: The Address Fujairah Resort + Spa and Al Maryah Central (United Arab Emirates), Ritz-Carlton Reserve at Caroline Bay (Bermuda), Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, KPMG Corporate Learning Center, Metropica, and Turnberry Ocean Club (USA).

14/

TECHNOLOGICAL PROWESS

From digital design applications that streamline the process between pen and presentation to photo-realistic renderings, animations, and more, the role of a designer is evolving. Computer-generated graphics from InfraWorks and CAD recently aided in the effective communication of scale and character related to place in the planning Ras Banas in Egypt. The precise representation of curves and freeform surfaces helped our client visually understand the how and why behind design recommendations.

12/

GREATER PURPOSE

Building strength, stability, and independence for families, EDSA employees partnered with Habitat for Humanity in creating affordable housing and shelter for Broward County residents. As part of our desire to positively influence lives and do so responsibly, EDSA employees annually participate in more than 20 charitable organizations.

15/

ANNUAL RETREAT

Every year, EDSA team members gather for a day of relationship building, learning, and social engagement. We look to the future, challenge ourselves to think outside the box, and open our minds to the best and brightest ideas.



16/

ON TRACK

EDSA had the pleasure of collaborating on Brightline, Florida's express train service connecting passengers to Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach with future service to Orlando. EDSA addressed the public realm, open spaces, parking overflow, and circulation associated with the Miami station as well as partnering with other consultants on a design vision and overall framework for delivery and maintenance of the transportation corridor.



17/

NOW OR NEVER

EDSA developed a property audit which brings to light several considerations before engaging in upgrades, enhancements, and/or expansion plans. While every property is unique, the checklist offers a summary of time-tested criteria for proposed developments and/or existing property improvements.



18/

SPEAKING OUT

As part of a panel discussion, EDSA President Doug Smith shared his thoughts and ideas on innovation in design for mixed-used and master planned projects at MexHIC 2018. In total, EDSA participated in 25 industry events – contributing to the design conversation and garnering insights.

19/

DESIGN EXCELLENCE

The American Society of Landscape Architects Florida Chapter recognized the following project for their design excellence: Green Wise Headquarters (Japan) – Frederic B. Stresau Award, Environmental Sustainability Honor and Award of Excellence; Sheikh Zayed Desert Learning Center (United Arab Emirates) – Award of Honor; "Every Hero Has a Story" Student Awareness Campaign (USA) – Award of Honor. In addition, The Williamsburg Inn (USA) and Kimpton Seafire Resort + Spa (Grand Cayman) joined the exclusive AAA/CAA Five Diamond Club as featured in CNN Travel "Best Hotels in North America and the Caribbean."

20/

CULTURAL GATHERINGS

As an international firm with employees from around the globe, we celebrate our diversity in the best way possible – with food!





WE ARE A COLLECTIVE
GROUP OF DESIGNERS WITH
THE VISION, CURIOSITY,
AND PERSISTENCE TO TAKE
THE LEAD IN EXPLORING
NEW POSSIBILITIES WITH
ASTOUNDING CREATIVITY.

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