



# *Excellence on the Waterfront*

2020

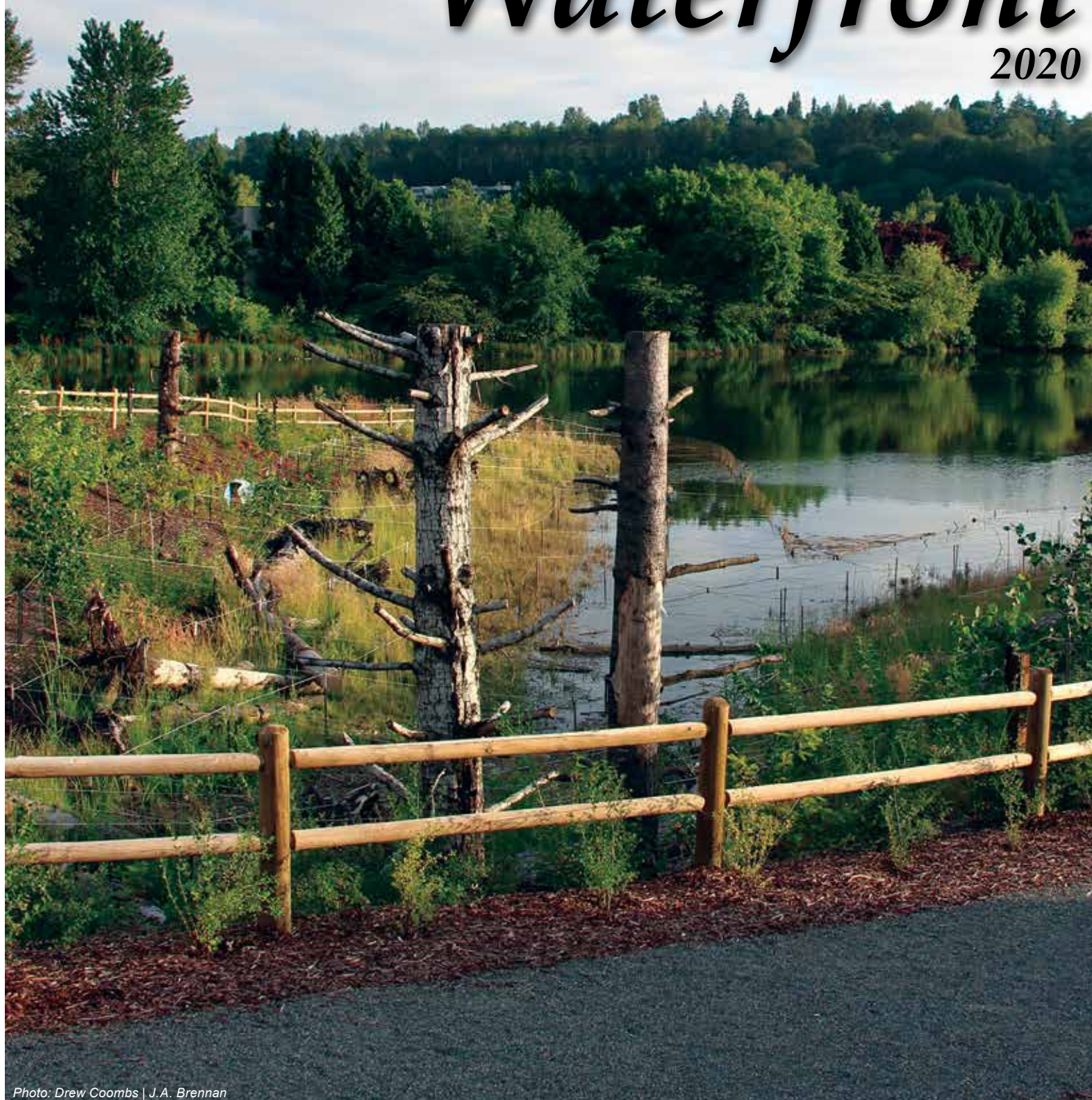


Photo: Drew Coombs | J.A. Brennan





## Excellence on the Waterfront 2020

As friends of the Waterfront Center, we know that the Excellence on the Waterfront Awards program has brought visibility and recognition to some of the best waterfront designs, planning, and developments from around the world for nearly 40 years. During these four decades, there have been a remarkable 380 award recipients whose presentations are publicly available and are searchable on the TWC website. There is no other resource available that showcases and advocates for quality waterfront development in our cities and communities around the world.

This year, unlike years past, jurors gathered around their laptops at home instead of at Ann and Dick's lovely cottage in Cape May, New Jersey, to mix and mingle and to review the dozens of submissions for this year's awards. However, similar to years past, the submissions were excellent and represented a diversity of waterfront designs and developments from around the globe. It was a difficult feat to narrow the field to just a few awardees.

During this unprecedented time, where gathering has become impossible and coordinating a virtual awards program has been filled with hurdles, we want to thank everyone who has made this possible. Our jurors, Stewart McKenzie, Dominica Stasiak, and Rod Marler, were marvelous, and were also instrumental in navigating the technological challenges along the way. Most importantly, we want to thank Ann and Dick for not only seeing this vital awards program through its 33rd year, but also for their lifelong dedication to advocating for quality waterfronts around the world.

Michael Sriprasert, 2020 Jury Chair

### The 2020 Jury

**Chair: Michael Sriprasert**  
President  
Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation  
Pittsburgh, PA

**Rod Marler**  
Principal  
Warren & Mahoney  
Auckland, NZ

**Dominica Stasiak**  
Senior Project Manager  
Langan Engineering  
New York, NY

**Stewart McKenzie**  
Senior Associate  
Environmental Design Associates  
Somerville, MA



Photo: Ed Wonsek

The **Excellence on the Waterfront Awards** program was initiated in 1987 through grants from the Design Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Marine Manufacturers Association. The honor awards recognize high quality design and development work. Entries are accepted from around the world for plans, built projects and student submissions. The Center also recognizes citizen efforts through the Clearwater Award.

**Top:** Clippership Wharf, Boston, MA

**Above:** Ann Breen and Dick Rigby at Cape May, NJ. Cofounders and codirectors of The Waterfront Center and the Excellence on the Waterfront Awards.

**Opposite:** Friends of the Chicago River Pier Approach, St. Petersburg, FL  
Waterfront Vancouver, Vancouver, WA

**Cover:** Duwamish Garden Habitat Restoration Project  
Duwamish River, Tukwila, WA

**Awards Book Produced by:**  
Chris Carlson & Steve Durrant  
Seattle, WA



Photo: Brittany Harthan



Photo: B Wilks

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## Criteria

An interdisciplinary jury of professional planners, designers, city officials, and community, business and development representatives determine the awards using the following qualitative criteria:

**Sensitivity of the design to water.** Document how the entry makes use of the waterfront and water resource, how it provides for active public enjoyment of the waterfront, and, where possible, provides for physical and visual access to and along the waterfront.

**Quality and harmony of design.** Show how the entry fits into the natural or man-made surroundings, and incorporates and celebrates the unique historic and cultural features of the community, particularly as they relate to the waterfront. The human scale of the project/plan is also a consideration.

**Civic contribution.** State how the project has helped the economy of the community, boosted civic pride or has otherwise had a positive affect on the area. Show how the work is sustainable and how it is economically viable over the long run.

**Environmental values.** Show how environmental values are stressed. This aspect and the importance of sound science is very important to juries.

**Enrichment.** Show how the project or plan contributes to the overall cultural richness of the community. Where applicable, relate how the entry provides interpretive information, art or other facilities to explain an area's waterfront heritage and natural values.

**Degree of difficulty.** Describe how various natural, political, jurisdictional, economic or permitting obstacles were overcome.

## TOP HONOR PROJECT

### Duwamish Garden Habitat Restoration Project

*Duwamish River, Tukwila, WA*

## TOP HONOR PLAN

### A Vision for Buffalo Bayou East

*Houston, TX*

## HONOR AWARDS – PROJECTS

### Clippership Wharf

*East Boston, MA*

### Inter-Tidal Pool at Roberto Clemente State Park

*Bronx, NY*

### Saluda Riverwalk

*Columbia, SC*

### St. Petersburg Pier Approach

*St. Petersburg, FL*

### The Waterfront

*Vancouver, WA*

## HONOR AWARDS – PLAN

### Wayzata Lake Effect Park – Comprehensive Plan

*Wayzata, MN*

## CLEARWATER AWARD

### Friends of the Chicago River and River Day Volunteers

*Chicago, IL*



Photo: Lioneye Aerials





## Top Honor Award PROJECT

### Duwamish Garden Habitat Restoration Project

Duwamish River, Tukwila, WA



Photo: Drew Coombs | J.A. Brennan

Submitted by:  
**Jim Brennan**

JA Brennan Associates  
Seattle, WA

**Mike Perfetti**  
City of Tukwila, WA

Duwamish Gardens is located on the Duwamish River south of Seattle in Tukwila, WA. The river originates in the Cascade Mountains as the Green River and becomes the Duwamish twelve miles upstream in tide flats of Puget Sound. Once an important salmon breeding ground and habitat, the river has been straightened, filled, armored and polluted over time in response to large scale industries along its shores. Today it is being actively reclaimed by the Muckleshoot Tribe and others committed to reviving its salmon and riparian habitat. The project is reconnecting the Tribe with its traditional river landscape and providing water access for other communities living along it. It is an important project in the Puget Sound region and stands as an emblem of how to revive a significant natural and cultural resource.

The 3-acre property is now a public park that provides multiple views of the river, a hand-carry boat launch, open space for play, a gathering space for ceremonies and small events, interpretive signs, and public art. It provides needed respite in the midst of dense commercial and industrial districts.

**Resources:**  
[jabrennan.com](http://jabrennan.com)  
[tukwilawa.gov](http://tukwilawa.gov)

The primary goal of the Gardens is to provide off-channel rearing habitat for Chinook salmonids. A one-acre marsh and mudflat creates critical food production and a shallow water refuge – a transition zone for the young fish as they begin to process salt water and fend off larger prey species in anticipation of adapting to ocean waters. This embayment also provides habitat for birds and other animals. Ducks, geese, sandpipers, osprey, harbor seals, and otters have adapted to the site. Native plants inhabit the site, including the hazelnut. A staple food of the Salish people for millennia, hazelnut trees arc through the park in rows as a reminder of their traditional home place.

In 2017 the Muckleshoot Tribe blessed two newly-carved shovel nose canoes at Duwamish Gardens. The blessing is a tribal tradition and bears good luck and safe travels for those who travel in the boats. The ceremony also established the Gardens as a space for tribal events, including a gathering circle near the park entry for story telling.

The park encourages visitor exploration with trails that provide marsh and river views, teaching stations that explain the river and its ecology, salmon habitat, and its historic relationship to Salish culture and to those who homesteaded along its banks.

The project posed several technical challenges including removal of contaminated soils; design of slopes and plant communities for complex estuarine hydrology; discovery and documentation of an archeological site; recording of historic farmstead history and salvage of historic building materials, and; navigation of construction beneath overhead light rail and underground power lines. Final construction cost \$5.5 million.



Photo: Drew Coombs | J.A. Brennan





Photo: Drew Coombs | J.A. Brennan



Photo: Drew Coombs | J.A. Brennan

**What the jury said:**  
Very thorough  
ecological habitat  
study well applied,  
good diversity of  
planting well adapted  
to environment,  
salmon habitat  
provided, good flood  
control, public water  
access



Photo: Mike Perfetti | City of Tukwila

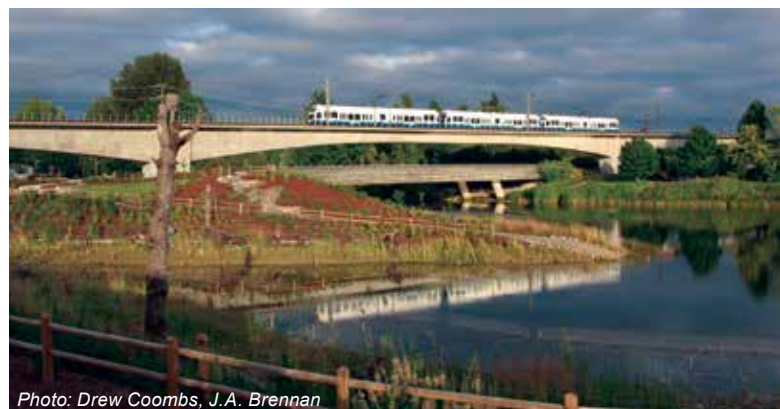


Photo: Drew Coombs, J.A. Brennan



## Top Honor Award PLAN

### A Vision for Buffalo Bayou East Houston, TX



Photo: Glen Cox | BBP

Submitted by:

**Anne Olson**

Buffalo Bayou Partnership  
Houston, TX

**Michael Van Valkenburgh**

MVVA  
Brooklyn, NY

**Utile**

Boston, MA

**HR&A Advisors**

New York, NY

Buffalo Bayou East is located between downtown Houston (Shepherd Drive) and the Port of Houston Turning Basin. This eastern stretch of the bayou is lined with both active and derelict industrial sites that create a land use barrier between the water and the surrounding neighborhoods of the Fifth Ward and Denver Harbor.

A lack of street and visual connections also separate these diverse neighborhoods from the water, and have created obstacles to continuing the trails and greenspaces that Houstonians and visitors enjoy along the bayou's western waterfront.

The master plan, implemented by Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Utile, and Michael Van Valkenburgh and Associates, extends the park and trail network into the East End and connects them to the district's long-established, culturally rich neighborhoods.

Utile also designed concept plans for selected sites not intended as parks or trail corridors.

For example, at Lockwood South it designed single and multi-family housing through public green spaces and a public promenade directly accessible to waterfront parkland. At Turkey Bend, Utile designed adaptive reuse concepts for a warehouse and connected barge terminal as incubator and event spaces, including an internal open-air courtyard that provides physical access to the bayou below.

Buffalo Bayou East Master Plan brings long needed equity to open space investment in Houston, adding signature parks, trails and new uses to the Greater East End and Fifth Ward communities. It signals recognition of the long standing necessity to provide access for all residents to the city's rich water and landscape resources.

**Resources:**  
[buffalobayou.org](http://buffalobayou.org)  
[mvvainc.com](http://mvvainc.com)  
[hraadvisors.com](http://hraadvisors.com)  
[utiledesign.com](http://utiledesign.com)



Courtesy: Buffalo Bayou Partnership





Photo: Geoff Lyon | BBP

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Courtesy: Buffalo Bayou Partnership

**What the jury said:**  
*Ambitious plan, fits  
all Waterfront Center  
awards criteria well,  
industrial site embraced,  
good likelihood of  
implementation,  
completion of first phase  
a plus*



Photo: Utile

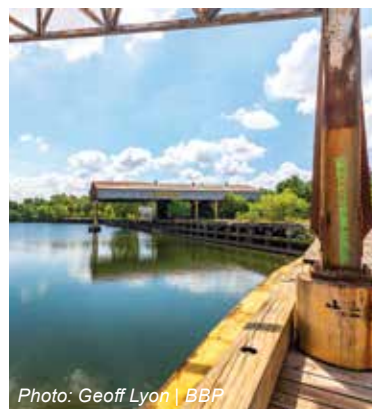


Photo: Geoff Lyon | BBP



## Honor Award Project

# Clippership Wharf

East Boston, MA



Photo: Ed Wonsek

Submitted by:

**Robert Adams**

Halvorson | Tighe & Bond Studio  
Boston, MA

**Nicholas Iselin**

Lendlease Corporation  
Boston, MA

### Resources:

[clippershipwharf.com](http://clippershipwharf.com)

[halvorsondesign.com](http://halvorsondesign.com)

[lendlease.com](http://lendlease.com)



Photo: Ed Wonsek



Photo: Ed Wonsek



Photo: Ed Wonsek

### What the jury said:

*Good design of a  
layered waterfront, good  
public water access,  
good flood and sea  
level rise protection,  
educational component,  
good improvement  
without losing historic  
context*

Clippership Wharf is a luxury and affordable housing development on 12 acres of the East Boston Inner Harbor waterfront, once an important hub for fisheries and cargo ships. The complex includes LEED-certified apartments, condominiums and affordable housing with a total of 480 units at full build-out.

A 1,700-foot "living shoreline" along the harbor includes

saltwater marshes, rocky beaches and wildlife habitat integrated into the site through a variety of harbor walks and access points, including a beach, kayak center and floating dock. The site's ground plane is raised to create a 14-foot buffer from high tides. Retractable flood planks along areas prone to flooding protect parking and other ground floor areas.

Amenities within the development include sweeping 270-degree views of downtown Boston and East Boston, fitness areas, social spaces for games, an indoor living room and catering kitchen, a waterfront work-from-home space, restaurant, and artist gallery.

Full build out is estimated at \$270 million.





## Honor Award Project

# Inter-Tidal Pool at Roberto Clemente State Park

Bronx, NY

Submitted by:  
**Molly Bourne**  
Mathews Nielsen  
Landscape Architects  
New York, NY

**Leslie Wright**  
New York City Regional Director  
New York State Office of  
Parks, Recreation and Historic  
Preservation  
New York, NY

**Resources:**  
[mnlandscape.com](http://mnlandscape.com)  
[parks.ny.gov](http://parks.ny.gov)

**What the jury said:**  
*Nice piece of ecological display for an underserved community, helps water quality and provides habitat*



Photo: Elizabeth Felicella



Photo: Barrett Doherty

The Inter-Tidal Pool at Roberto Clemente State Park (RCSP) is in the Morris Heights neighborhood of the Bronx. The Pool encourages visitors to interact with ecosystems not previously known or accessible to them. A tidal marsh and habitat for local plants and animals filters upland runoff that typically contributes to combined sewer overflow. Elevated walkways lead visitors to the river allowing them to watch the tidal marsh where fish and crabs now take refuge.

The site was overgrown and had been ignored for years — another example of an inner city river whose worth was undervalued and whose community was underserved. The impact of Hurricane Sandy and ongoing renovation at the park created the opportunity to redesign the park's hard edge

into an interactive public space that leads from careful grading and a well-designed porous bulkhead with salt marshes, tidal pools and channels up to a hard surface park plaza surrounded by vegetation and open space — a dynamic cross section of the river landscape in this part of the city. Interpretive information about vegetation helps residents and visitors understand the 'nature in their back yard', an experience not previously available to them.

The project took a number of years. Community input remained in the forefront throughout the planning, design and construction processes, including park programming. The design reflects the neighborhood's intent for park experience, safety and access to nature.



Photo: Elizabeth Felicella

The Inter-Tidal Pool provides a 'dynamic ecological heart' to the park and neighborhood.

The Inter-Tidal Pool is RCSP's largest renovation effort. The project began in 2012 and was completed in 2017 at a cost of \$3 million.



Photo: Elizabeth Felicella



## Honor Award Project

### Saluda Riverwalk Columbia, SC



Photo: Eric Harkins

Submitted by:  
**Mike Dawson**  
River Alliance  
Columbia, SC

**Will Schenk**  
EngenuitySC  
Columbia, SC

**Resources:**  
[riveralliance.org](http://riveralliance.org)  
[alltrails.com](http://alltrails.com)



Photo: Mike Mayo, Palmetto Outdoors

**What the jury said:**  
*Opens up an inaccessible  
river stretch to public  
access, good direct water  
access, sensitive siting of  
walkway to preserve trees,  
raised boardwalk protects  
from floods, bridge  
connection to future park*



Photo: Will Schenk

The Saluda Riverwalk weaves along and above three miles of the Lower Saluda River into downtown Columbia, SC. Paved shoreline trails (all ADA compliant) and an elevated boardwalk provide quiet walking, biking and views of a rare southern river landscape, previously unappreciated. Launch sites provide fishing and kayaking access, even from rocky banks. The Riverwalk also acknowledges the area's history via views of a former factory dam and facility designs that acknowledge 1830s architecture.

Interpretive signs along the Riverwalk illustrate its history – for example the Saluda Mill and its former canal and mill-race, archeological sites documenting indigenous settlement from at least 12,000 years ago, and native wildlife, vegetation and geology.

The Riverwalk has become a point of civic pride. The Saluda had been long ignored by the city, a typical story for so many urban areas over time. Today, it has become a signature feature in the city's future and increasingly provides respite for residents seeking natural settings away from nearby interstate highways, an active railroad, the Riverbank Zoo, and during the current pandemic.

The project is the culmination of over 25 years of civic collaboration across multiple governmental and nongovernmental agencies, all led by the River Alliance. Losses in funding, highly variable river flows, and redesign have finally resulted in today's Riverwalk. A permanent program managed by the City of Columbia Parks & Recreation Department will maintain the project in perpetuity.



Photo: Margaret DuBose





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## Honor Award Project

# St. Petersburg Pier Approach

St. Petersburg, FL

The Pier Approach is a 20-acre parcel between downtown St. Petersburg and its pier on Tampa Bay. The goal of the project is to link downtown to an extensive, ecologically improved waterfront as a people place that lures people out to the bay through various activity spaces, bicycle and pedestrian paths. Pier Approach also reduces streets, parking areas, and traffic.

experiences against the Tampa Bay backdrop, all linked by a north to south promenade.

The Pier Approach has successfully caught the imagination of St. Petersburg residents and visitors after extensive planning, design and coordination among governmental and community stakeholders.



Submitted by:

**Barbara Wilks**

W Architecture and Landscape  
Architecture  
Brooklyn, NY

**Raul Quintana**

City of St. Petersburg, FL

**Resources:**

[w-architecture.com](http://w-architecture.com)  
[stpete.org](http://stpete.org)

Pier Approach focuses on three interlinked pedestrian “experiences” that create an urban spine from downtown to the pier:

- A plaza and market pavilion acts as the main axis with local food vendors, temporary event spaces, and bike share and tram services to the pier district.
- A new family park and pond provides picnic areas along the waterfront, walks through the native gardens, play areas for various ages, and a sun deck. The pond doubles as stormwater management with habitat, new wetlands, and a plethora of native vegetation.
- A marina and overlook pull people to the water. Seat steps, a marina lawn with shuffleboard and bocce ball courts, and an informal amphitheater along the water's edge provide multiple



Photo: B Wilks



Photo: B Wilks



Photo: B Wilks



Photo: B Wilks

## What the jury said:

*Diverse experience options but well integrated, interesting children's area, lack of barriers allows easy access, natural appearance in an urban setting, created new wetlands*



## Honor Award Project

### The Waterfront Vancouver, WA



Photo: Lioneye Aerials

Submitted by:

**Matt Grady**

Gramor Development, Inc.

**Julie Hannon**

City of Vancouver  
Parks and Recreation  
Vancouver, WA

**Resources:**

[gramor.com](http://gramor.com)  
[cityofvancouver.us](http://cityofvancouver.us)

#### **What the jury said:**

*Liked water features that connected people to the water, classy, the integration of elements of the industrial park, diversity of spaces something for everyone, good soft edge, kid space gives access to water, high quality*

The Waterfront is located along the Columbia River in southwest Washington, across the river from Portland, Oregon. The project consists of 32 acres of mixed housing, commercial and office development, new neighborhood streets, and private and public waterfront open space. It has transformed a former century-old lumber mill, paper manufacturing site, railroad spur lines, contaminated soils, and industrial waste into a vibrant downtown neighborhood along one of the most important and visually significant rivers in the country.

The project focuses on compact vertical housing and commercial development interspersed with new streets and sidewalks that connect downtown Vancouver to the

river. Multiple access points run north and south from the platted neighborhood blocks. A slender park reflects the natural shape of the river bank. The west end of the park contains a picnic area with a river overlook. The east end hosts a play area, the Headwaters Wall educational water feature, and a crescent-shaped amphitheater. The Grant Street Pier dramatically cantilevers 90 feet over the water providing panoramic views. A half-mile long pedestrian path runs the full length of the project's shoreline, extending the well-established Columbia Renaissance Trail (1993 *Excellence on the Waterfront Honor Award*) for a longer riverfront experience.

Three components of the new public park exemplify the project's focus on visual and symbolic access to the river and its larger historic landscape:

- The Grant Street Pier and plaza contain engravings of the first sailing ships on the Columbia River and working drawings of pier construction.
- The Headwaters Wall water feature contains an important inscription about the significance of the Columbia River and a bronze casting of its basin.

- An interpretive plaque identifies a massive concrete roller and a pair of concrete gears used in the paper mill acknowledging its historic dominance of the site.

The project also focused on conservation issues. Buildings, streets, and sidewalks conform to LEED standards for energy or the Green Globe Initiative. A myriad of site materials were cleaned and reused as infrastructure to avoid the export and import of construction materials.

The project was 'in process' for over 13 years due to complicated issues that ranged from industrial zoning, lack of access through railroad lines on the site, no street, water and power infrastructures, or funds. Years of partnering with the City of Vancouver, the Port of Vancouver, the Army Corps of Engineers, BNSF Railway, WA State Dept. of Ecology, managed in partnership with the Columbia Waterfront Partnership, has created the development in construction today. The Waterfront is anticipated to bring people back to Vancouver from typical commutes into Portland, and to result in an estimated 7,900 jobs at final build out.



Photo: Lioneye Aerials





## Honor Award Plan

# Wayzata Lake Effect Park Comprehensive Plan

Wayzata, MN



Photo: Civitas

Wayzata is a small town on the northern shore of Lake Minnetonka, 12 miles west of Minneapolis. Since the 19th century it has served as a lakeside retreat for urban residents and visitors. Over the past 30 years, the city and its partners completed a series of strategies designed to capitalize on the lake's assets while maintaining its small town character, an issue that had been in public discussion for over 80 years. Recent intense commercial and residential development and congestion have required the city to more actively engage in planning to protect the existing and future character of the city and that of the lakefront.

The plan builds on the city's 10-year Framework Plan,

responds to citizen, state, federal and technical stakeholder input, and focuses on retaining its small town charm while facilitating its development as a regional destination for year-round lake recreation.

The plan translates community values and priorities, such as lake access, connectivity, resolution of parking and circulation issues, enhanced venues and beauty of design into:

- Improvements to safety features at railroad crossings
- Improvements to lake water quality, wetland, and riparian habitat
- Development of a lakefront promenade the length of downtown
- Improvements along Lake

Street, Wayzata's main downtown thoroughfare

- Development of lakefront parks and bike trails
- Redesign of municipal parking for visual quality, pedestrian safety, programmed events and venues.

These community-endorsed actions respond to important issues, and solidify the community's commitment to its city and lake landscape. They strike a balance between residents who want access to the lake with stakeholders who want a healthy downtown.

As of 2020, a Lake Street plaza, a Lake Street bikeway and a lake walk have been constructed.

Submitted by:  
**Scott Jordan**  
Principal  
Civitas  
Denver, CO

**Jeff Dahl**  
City Manager  
City of Wayzata, MN

**Resources:**  
[civitas.com](http://civitas.com)  
[wayzata.org](http://wayzata.org)

**What the jury said:**  
*Plan put together well, clarity of plan well communicated, best presentation, good public outreach offering alternatives, nice lifestyle analysis to illustrate how plan could be used, boardwalk unifies diverse experiences*



Photo: Civitas





**Clearwater Award**  
*Citizen and non-profit group  
waterfront accomplishments*

**Friends of the  
Chicago River  
and  
River Day  
Volunteers**  
*Chicago, IL*

*Submitted by:*  
Metropolitan Water Reclamation  
District of Greater Chicago  
Chicago, IL

**Resources:**  
[chicagoriver.org](http://chicagoriver.org)  
[mwr.org](http://mwr.org)

*The Clearwater Award is named  
for the group of volunteers based in  
Beacon, New York, whose mission  
was to help clean up the Hudson  
River. The organization was formed  
by the late Peter Seeger.*



Photo: Friends





Photo: Dan Wendt | MWRD

The Waterfront Center



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**Opposite:** Horner Park on the North Branch of the Chicago River  
People returning to the Chicago River

Since 1979 the Friends of the Chicago River has been working to improve the health of the Chicago River system for the benefit of wildlife and people. As a result it has laid a strong foundation for the river as a continuously healthy and beautiful riverine landscape within the Chicago region. It is the only organization solely dedicated to the Chicago River system.

as McCormick Bridgehouse and Chicago River Museum, exhibits that help visitors understand the dynamic relationship between their river and the region's vitality and health.

Thanks to Friends for its consistent and long standing commitment, the Chicago River has become a wildlife haven and treasured city and regional resource.

Friends also focuses on building partnerships at all scales, growing groups of supporters, and developing a variety of efforts to help people see the river as a catalyst for community revitalization, and to facilitate their participation in its long term health (i.e. River Day Volunteers).

Since its founding, Friends has also undertaken a variety of policy initiatives and played a key role in changing how the City of Chicago and other municipalities understand and treat the river in land use ordinances and plans. This has led to a number of improvements along the river's edge, including riverwalks, waterside parks and other recreation uses, and on-the-ground projects that have improved water quality and preserved habitat. It has instituted education programs, such



Photo: Friends

River Day volunteers

McCormick Bridgehouse and Chicago River Museum

Color cruise with the Friends on the Chicago River network

Chicago River Fish Hotel

Ronan Park Natural Area habitat restoration, North Branch of the Chicago River

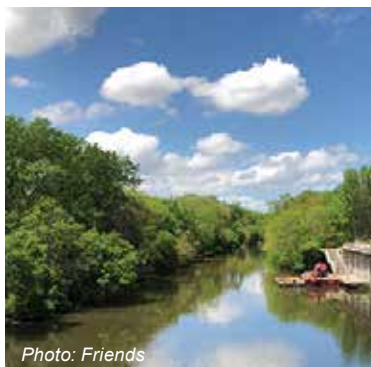


Photo: Friends



Photo: Friends



Photo: Michael Minn



Photo: Ted Nelson





**The Waterfront Center** is a non-profit, public interest educational organization working to assist waterfront communities make the wisest long-term use of their urban waterfront resources. Based in Washington D.C. and consisting of members throughout the world, the Center uses workshops, community consultations, conferences, awards programs and publications to help communities understand how their waterfront resources can contribute to community economic, social, recreational and aesthetic vitality. Since its founding in 1981, the Center has helped hundreds of communities of every size on every continent. For more information about its philosophy and work, contact:

[www.waterfrontcenter.org](http://www.waterfrontcenter.org)

*Inter-Tidal Pool at Roberto Clemente State Park  
Bronx, NY  
Photo: Elizabeth Felicella*