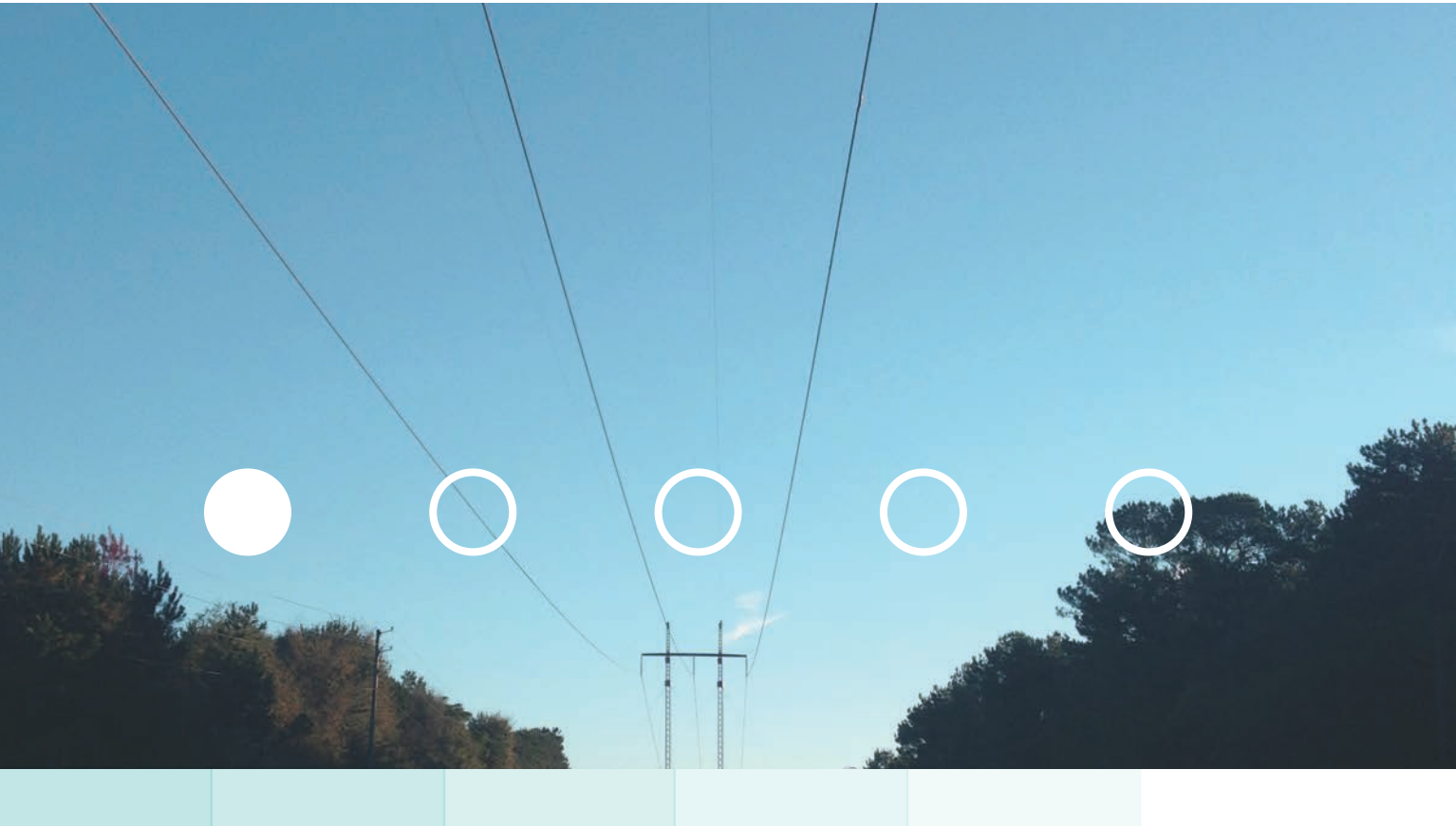


# CONNECTIVITY

2015 GEORGIA LANDSCAPE MAGAZINE







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# CONNECTIVITY

In the early stages of planning the 2015 edition of *Georgia Landscape Magazine*, we decided that we wanted to focus our efforts on exploring a single concept that would be relevant to all three of the College of Environment + Design's disciplines. The magazine is a place for CED students, alumni, and faculty to share their work, interests, and experiences. The diverse community contributing to this publication creates an interesting opportunity to look at a single issue through a wide range of lenses.

The magazine staff spent time discussing themes that we see driving the disciplines represented in the CED, and we continued to come back to the idea of connectivity. Connectivity has become a buzz word in our fields, typically referring to the physical connections that we try to create through our designs. But the idea of "connectivity" extends far deeper than the physicality of these designed spaces, and is **integral in every aspect of our education in the CED.**

**As designers we create connections between spaces, but also seek to capture the unique essence that defines a place.** No profession is isolated, but design professions seem to be particularly dependent upon cooperation and collaboration. The very nature of the CED speaks to this concept; **understanding the past is imperative to designing for the present and planning for the future.** As preservationists, designers, and planners we are stewards of the natural and built environments, and this position requires that we be part artist and part scientist. This is a tall order, but **it also creates incredible opportunities to be both empathetic and proactive in solving design problems.**

The 2015 edition of *Georgia Landscape Magazine* is an exploration of the connections that are essential to our success in the fields of Landscape Architecture, Historic Preservation, and Environmental Planning and Design. This publication is also a celebration of the connectivity between current and past students and professors of the CED. We hope you enjoy the issue.

**KATHERINE PERRY**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, 2015



## 4 THE IDEA OF EDUCATION

AS HE WRAPS UP HIS 32ND AND FINAL YEAR AT UGA, PROFESSOR BRUCE K. FERGUSON REFLECTS ON THE POWER AND PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

## 6 2ND ANNUAL VERTICAL CHARRETTE

CED STUDENTS OF ALL AGES AND DISCIPLINES CONNECT TO COLLECTIVELY ADDRESS ECOLOGY AND COMMUNITY ON ATLANTA'S WEST SIDE

## 8 IN THE WEEDS

WHY A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE DISCOURSE ABOUT PLANTS MAY BE RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

+ EDUCATION

## 10 FROM ROOT TO ROAST

A CED GRADUATE HELPS JITTERY JOE'S ESTABLISH AN EDIBLE AND EDUCATIONAL CHICORY CROP

## 12 RE-IMAGINING GEORGIA TOWNS

BRINGING COMMUNITY VISIONS TO A TANGIBLE FUTURE

+ COMMUNITY

## 16 HOPE IN HAITI

DESIGNERS AND PRESERVATIONISTS FIND COMMUNITY INCLUSION TO BE CRUCIAL AT EVERY STAGE OF THE REBUILDING PROCESS

## 20 DIVERSIFYING PLACE

HOW FOREIGN LANDSCAPES MIGHT INFORM OUR PERCEPTIONS OF HOME

+ PLACE & SPACE

## 22 SAVANNAH HARBOR EXPANSION PROJECT

THE EXPANSION OF SAVANNAH'S PORT COULD PROVIDE A MUCH NEEDED MODEL FOR LARGE-SCALE GEOTECHNICAL INTERVENTIONS

## 26 DRAWING ON CHIP SULLIVAN

CED STUDENTS REVISIT THE ART OF QUICK SKETCHING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

## 30 CONNECTING DATA, DISCIPLINES, + DISTURBED HYRDOLOGY

A CED STUDENT WORKS WITH AMERICAN RIVERS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AT HARTSFIELD-JACKSON ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO PERFORM A LAND-SUITABILITY STUDY FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

## 34 PRESERVING THE PAST, DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE

HOW A HISTORIC HOME BECAME A TEACHING TOOL FOR MULTIPLE GENERATIONS OF CED STUDENTS

## 36 HISTORICAL ECOLOGY MAPPING PROJECT

CED FACULTY AND STUDENTS INVESTIGATE ATHENS THROUGH THE AGES, SEEKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TIME, ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION, AND OUR COMMUNITY

## 40 CONNECTING TO THE MODERN PAST

SCOTT SIMPSON'S AWARD-WINNING EFFORT TO RESTORE A THOMAS CHURCH DESIGN ON UGA'S SOUTH CAMPUS

+ TIME

# THE IDEA OF EDUCATION

AS HE WRAPS UP HIS 32ND AND FINAL YEAR AT UGA,  
PROFESSOR BRUCE K. FERGUSON REFLECTS ON THE POWER  
AND PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

*Bruce K. Ferguson, Professor, FASLA*  
*Photos by Annette Griffin*



It's not my nature to seek public attention; instead, I dedicate my time to developing professional skills and communities. But on a morning twenty years ago, I found my name trumpeted on the front page of the student newspaper *The Red & Black*. I was serving on the University Council's Executive Committee, which had forwarded an agenda item for the full council proposing a policy that all members of the University community would be encouraged to hold to an attitude of cultural diversity. I posed the question to the committee of whether it was possible this policy would violate academic freedom. A *Red & Black* reporter who was listening in on the meeting caught this question, and got it onto the front page of the next morning's paper.

Academic freedom is the principle that, on matters requiring consideration and thought (of which cultural diversity is one of many examples), you have the right to look at the evidence firsthand, to come to your own conclusions, and to present your conclusions in any appropriate venue. Even when surrounded by people who say there is only one way to think, you are allowed this expression. When academic freedom is suppressed by peer pressure or official agendas, questioning, searching, considering, debate, and progress are stopped. Education is then replaced by propaganda and obedience.

I live by a work ethic—the philosophy of doing good through one's work. The value of work is in its usefulness to the world. The choice of work is a commitment to contribute to the world, not to indulge oneself. The idea is to leave the world better than one found it. Forty years ago I dedicated my career to education, seeing in education the development of ability to do good work.

The unit of education is the educated individual. It happens inside each of us. We examine our understanding, recognize shortcomings, and read to fill gaps and to extend our range. We write, to organize our thoughts. We take upon ourselves the discipline of mathematics and the release of poetry. Education is an ideal. It is a high, shining light reminding us to continue striving in its direction.

Right:  
Professor Ferguson with a  
group of students during a  
class walk

Opposite:  
Professor  
Bruce K. Ferguson



The exercise of academic freedom—applying one’s mind in sorting through evidence and developing a viewpoint that you can support in a debate—is the highest exercise in education. It prepares one for participation in professional debates, to discover favorable new designs, and to contribute to the progress of the world.

The truth emerges from and is strengthened by active, vigorous competition among alternative ideas. We are open-minded when hearing new alternatives, and at the same time unforgiving in our critique of them. We follow the evidence wherever it may lead, and change our minds when convinced of a better way.

We scrutinize design sketches so we can work toward superior alternatives in future attempts. We seek to rise above unfounded rumors and suppositions, to discard obsolete assumptions, and to discover new and better ways to make the world a better place in which to live.

Anyone who has examined the evidence and come to a revised conclusion should wish that future generations will have the same ability, and the same freedom to develop further insights and improve upon our work. Progress is a continuous process over time; we are contributors to it only for a passing, hopeful moment.

So despite my disinclination toward spotlights, I went to the University Council meeting where the cultural diversity policy was to be discussed, armed to stand up for academic freedom with quotes from Thomas Jefferson and Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes about the free marketplace of

ideas and the strengthening of truth from competition among alternative ideas. But *The Red & Black’s* headline, “Proposed Policy Could Violate Academic Freedom,” had done the day’s work for me. Many people besides myself were informed and prepared when they arrived; some had already contacted university administrators about the issue. The dictation of everybody’s attitude was removed from the University’s proposal.

We designers must be completely educated human beings. Amid all the world’s history, culture, commerce, and ecology, everything that happens on a site is part of the design problem. With broad learning, we see the implications of our work in the world. From specific disciplinary training we acquire specific tools to apply to our specific work. From our open communication and our sympathetic teamwork among people of different disciplines each project benefits from the advanced insights of all participants.

So we strive, in ourselves, in our classrooms, and in our professional communities. The most important thing is to do what the community needs. The least important concern is one’s comfort. Do it with an athletic level of activity. Develop yourself, so you can contribute more. Do it with a humble heart, an open mind, and a will of iron. Feel the joy of activity, of doing the right thing, and of succeeding. ✦



# 2ND ANNUAL VERTICAL CHARRETTE

CED STUDENTS OF ALL AGES AND DISCIPLINES CONNECT TO COLLECTIVELY  
ADDRESS ECOLOGY AND COMMUNITY ON ATLANTA'S WEST SIDE

*Katherine Perry, MLA 2016*  
*Photos by Kiley Aguar*



*Right:  
Charrette groups working  
in the studio*

*Opposite Left:  
Producing a concept  
sketch*

*Opposite Right:  
Team representatives  
during a site visit*



One of the strengths and most unique aspects of the College of Environment + Design is the interdisciplinary nature of its programming. Through degree programs in Historic Preservation, Landscape Architecture, and Environmental Planning and Design, the CED addresses the past, present, and future of the built environment. By creating opportunities for preservationists, designers, and

**“The CED prepares students for the collaborative quality of the professional world by creating opportunities for preservationists, designers, and planners to connect on projects, and encourages them to think through the entire lifetime of a site or project.”**

planners to connect on projects, the CED prepares students for the collaborative quality of the professional world and encourages them to think through the entire lifetime of a site or project.

In December 2014, the CED held its second annual vertical, interdisciplinary charrette, which brought together students of varying levels of experience from all three of the school's disciplines. For one intensive week of brainstorming,

discussion, and design, the students in the CED focused on a roughly 2,000 acre section on the west side of Atlanta's Beltline corridor.

Atlanta's Beltline is a sustainable redevelopment project incorporating a series of trails, rails, and greenspace in addition to adjacent development. The project will ultimately connect 45 in-town neighborhoods and link

them to the broader metropolitan Atlanta area via a range of transit solutions. The CED charrette examined a section of the Beltline on the west side of Atlanta and the surrounding area, including a large section of Proctor Creek, several industrial brownfields, a stone quarry, residential neighborhoods, and existing greenspaces.

The overall goal of the CED charrette was to address the opportunities that development of the Beltline presents

for restoring city ecology and life on the west side of Atlanta. To achieve this goal, the project was broken into 15 narrower focus areas addressing topics such as stream restoration, social connectivity, and urban agriculture. Students were able to sign up for project groups based on personal interests and experiences, enhancing their engagement with the project and the charrette process.

The results, which were presented to Beltline staff, incorporated the vast range of perspectives and experiences represented by 160 undergraduate and graduate students spanning the College's three programs. The collaboration and discussion amongst this network of students led to richer and more comprehensive approaches to reconnecting the ecology and community in Atlanta's west side—ideas that may not have been developed by landscape architects, historic preservationists, or environmental planners working alone.+

# IN THE WEEDS

WHY A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE DISCOURSE ABOUT PLANTS MAY BE RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

*Jacob Schindler, BLA 2017*

*Photos by Annette Griffin and Chloe Weigle*

We live in a dynamic period that challenges many assumptions about the environment and design. New waves of information accompany some of these debates, reinforcing and strengthening existing beliefs and practices. For other discourses, an in-depth review can result in the systematic dismantling of misconceptions or a blending of new and old concepts. Cumulative challenges of the latter type often initiate a paradigm shift and, in the case of plants, a shift may be close at hand. As we become further immersed in a world influenced by globalization and science, we cannot afford to ignore the ever-evolving challenges to our use of and thoughts about plant material.

Most people respond negatively to the term “weed.” This is understandable, considering the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture defines a weed as “a pest of potential economic importance to

the area endangered thereby and not yet present there, or present but not widely distributed and being officially controlled;” an object to be quarantined. The word “quarantine” brings thoughts of scarlet fever victims boarded up in their homes. Combine that with the implication of economic danger, and it is not surprising that American farmers consider plants like Palmer amaranth, *Amaranthus palmeri*, to be a noxious weed (USDA NRCS, 2014).

It is a natural inclination to want to keep these perceived weeds out of places in which they do not belong, but what about native weeds such as the Palmer amaranth? In a sense, it does belong where it grows; when a farmer finds himself fighting off amaranth in order to protect soybeans, a native plant is being forced out to make room for a non-native. Unfortunately, this situation is considerably complicated. One could make the argument that the best solution is for



the farmer to keep fighting the good fight, to secure his livelihood. On the other hand, as designers, we are now advised to make our best effort to specify native plants, even if they are less suited to an area than their non-native counterparts.

The issue of hybrids and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) further complicates competing ecological, design, and economic interests in the debate about native versus non-native plants. Through hybridization, plants can be interbred, resulting in a species with a combination of the characteristics previously found split between the two parent

species. If these crosses are performed between a native and non-native species, where does the resulting species land on the spectrum? With GMOs, genetic material is added, removed, and/or altered in order to get a different phenotypical expression (FDA, 2014). One unique characteristic of GMOs is that the modified DNA does not need to be from the same biological kingdom. In light of the previously mentioned discouragement regarding use of non-native species, there emerges a serious grey area concerning not only mixed species, but also mixed kingdoms.

One could certainly attempt to address these issues by refusing to purchase or specify any hybrids or GMOs in design projects, but there is another layer to this situation. These species are not inert in the field; they pollinate each other, often with unintended results. Enter glyphosate-resistant Palmer amaranth. Somehow a crop modified to be glyphosate-resistant was able to share that genetic information with *Amaranthus palmeri*. The resulting plant is a combination weedy, GMO, native which has generated some discussion about the potential future of plants.

These discussions are far from over. It is the duty of students, educators, practitioners, and researchers to educate themselves about natives, invasives, weeds, hybrids, GMOs, and the full slew of terms which are common vernacular in plant-related professions. Once educated, it is important to dispel misinformation as effectively as possible so that discussions are not wasted on semantics instead of solutions. Connections between relevant professions—formed by collaborative research and discourse on plants—are going to be integral to what could be a major paradigm shift in the classification and use of plants. +



Globe Amaranth  
*Gomphrena  
globosa*

This Page:  
Photos by  
Annette Griffin,  
MLA 2016

Opposite:  
Photo by Chloe  
Weigle, BLA 2017



# FROM ROOT TO ROAST

A CED GRADUATE HELPS JITTERY JOE'S ESTABLISH AN EDIBLE AND EDUCATIONAL CHICORY CROP

*Mary Charles Howard, BLA 2008*

*Photos by Hannah Pap Rocki*

How is our food grown? What does it look like? Where does it come from? Through my business, Georgia Food Tours, I work to help Georgians find answers to these questions, one person at a time. My passion for local farming, combined with a professional knowledge of landscape architecture, led me to dig even deeper into the Athens food scene for a local business seeking the establishment of a specialized crop: chicory.

In October 2013, Athens-based coffee roaster Jittery Joe's Coffee moved its roasting headquarters to a new location on the northwest corner of downtown Athens at 425 Barber Street, transforming the site from an old concrete manufacturing plant into a coffee roasting hub with an

undeveloped side yard. The owners of Jittery Joe's Coffee Company in Athens asked me to invigorate that side yard by planting a chicory plot.

When I arrived, the site was barren with only a small space of grass and two or three suspect weeds standing like castles near the entrance to the facility. The plot measured about 30 x 30 feet, and I first suggested transforming the small patch of greenspace, less the stalwart weeds, into a native pocket prairie. This solution seemed ideal until the dubious question arose, first posited by Jittery Joe's co-owner Michael Ripps' wife, Kim: "What about chicory?" Chicory is unquestionably a great coffee experiment that could alternatively serve as an ornamental and edible





Above:  
*Cichorium intybus var. sativum*

Right:  
Jittery Joe's Chicory Blend

Opposite:  
Mary Charles Howard at the  
chicory plot outside of Jittery  
Joe's Roasting Headquarters,  
Athens, Georgia

crop. The ultimate idea behind this chicory plot was to roast and mix the chicory roots into the roasted coffee.

Loving a challenge I answered, "I'll look into it," silently wondering, "Where can I get chicory, what does it look like, what part of the plant is used with coffee, and will it even grow in Athens?" I vowed to learn more about chicory, including how to grow it, how to use it in coffee, its growing region and requirements, and any other useful information. When I googled chicory, one of the first articles to pop up was Rans Thomas's "Chicory: A Powerful Perennial." Thomas explained that chicory is a perennial forb commonly planted in the southern United States for whitetail deer food plots. The root of chicory can be roasted, ground, and brewed as a coffee alternative. As a graduate of the University of Georgia, I was eager to contact a fellow alumnus about this project, and discovered that Thomas also lived in Athens. A chicory expert, found via the internet, in Athens? This was an unexpected turn of events. After a brief conversation outlining the project, Rans Thomas immediately expressed interest in getting involved. A partnership agreement was confirmed with a simple handshake, and the Jittery Joe's chicory plot project commenced.

Choosing the appropriate variety was the next concern as Rans began researching chicory, specifically with coffee in mind. In the meantime, I collected soil samples and prepared the forthcoming chicory plot. A local carpenter, John Green, constructed the plot frame while other Jittery Joe's employees shoveled their share of organic soil into the newly prepared planting bed. Wildflowers, donated by Wildwood Specialty Nursery, lit up the chicory plot like a full moon on a

harvest moon Sunday. Root chicory, scientific name *Cichorium intybus var. sativum*, presented itself as the chicory of choice for the Jittery Joe's chicory plot. Shortly thereafter, Rans ordered the seeds and scheduled a planting day. In June 2014, after only a few weeks, cotyledons of young plants emerged. In September, some of the young plants flowered while the roots grew four to six inches long. November arrived along with our first frost, and the roots were ready to be harvested. Charlie Mustard, Jittery Joe's Chief Executive Coffee Roaster, Chief Seed Purveyor Rans Thomas, and I, Chief Chicory Project Manager, decided to dig and assess the roots, and we found that they were ready for roasting.

This edible, educational, and ornamental chicory plot in the heart of a cityscape has become a local attraction. Visitors to the Jittery Joe's Roaster are intrigued by this "crop" growing at the roaster's front door. Curiosity to see, learn, and taste, abounds with visitors. Local enthusiasm for the plot and the successful first chicory harvest in the fall of 2014 have inspired my Jittery Joe's crew and me to plan on continuing this chicory plot each year for the combined benefits of aesthetics, education, and harvest.+



# RE-IMAGINING GEORGIA TOWNS

BRINGING COMMUNITY VISIONS TO A TANGIBLE FUTURE

*Christopher Stebbins, MLA 2015, MEPD 2016*  
*Photos and graphics by author*

Georgia is largely a state of small cities, but there is more to a small town than just the number of citizens living in it. There have been forces of change at work in these towns: the loss of farming and manufacturing jobs, fewer educational resources, young people leaving and moving to larger cities, a lack of resources, and poverty rates that are often considerably higher than most urban/suburban areas. In order to thrive, these small towns need to express a new vision of what they wish to be by either building on their past identity or developing a new one. No one is better at developing this new vision than the citizens themselves. While there is no lack of passion for expressing these needs, citizens often need assistance connecting their vision with something tangible.

A city's downtown area is one of the most vital drivers of economic development, social interaction, and cultural identity. A successful partnership is taking place in Georgia, where the primary aim is to foster vibrant downtowns—and it is working. The Georgia Downtown Renaissance

Partnership combines professionals from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG), the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Cities Foundation, and the Department of Community Affairs. This partnership successfully lends customized technical assistance to each local government's revitalization efforts.

The partnership is functionally spearheaded by the Renaissance Strategic Visioning and Planning (RSVP) program within the CVIOG. The RSVP is led by principal investigator Daniel Bivins, and involves part-time and full-time employment of landscape architecture and planning students from the University of Georgia's College of Environment +



*Below and right:  
The Courthouse Square plan  
re-imagined in Clarkesville, GA*

*Opposite:  
Concept perspective of outer  
Courthouse Square hub in  
Clarkesville, GA*



Design. Within the studio of the RSVP program, students provide technical and design services for many participating Georgia municipalities. Moreover, their work connects these cities to the resources they need in order to realize their own vision and maximize their potential.

As a graduate student in both landscape architecture and environmental planning, my role within the RSVP program is two-fold. First, I help facilitate public input with community stakeholders from a range of backgrounds and identify priorities. Second, I work toward developing innovative solutions that satisfy these priorities while honoring established planning and design principles. In short, I help connect a city's community members with a vision of what they desire to see in their community. It's been an exciting occupation to have while a student, and I am grateful for the experience.

The RSVP studio is currently conducting a strategic visioning process in the city of Clarkesville, located in Habersham County in

northern Georgia. First, we hosted numerous public input sessions with different groups of community members in the form of one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and a large town-hall meeting. From this process we received a vast amount of data which produced a list of top priorities that included the following:

- increased downtown housing
- increased business activity
- safe and comfortable walkability throughout
- parking availability
- a connection to the nearby riverfront park

While analyzing potential assets throughout Clarkesville, an opportunity presented itself on the edge of downtown. There is a series of public parcels containing the former, now vacated, county courthouse and its associated parking lots. An existing gazebo and small garden square are awkwardly located on the corner of a busy street resulting in an underutilized community space. This site could be reestablished as a \$20 million mixed-use development

to house retailers, offices, housing, and lodging that surround an active public green space. The development would create a new urban hub that satisfies Clarkesville's priorities while expanding walkability.

To establish a dense, socially-active urban environment, RSVP's proposed design incorporates a central square surrounded by two to four-story mixed commercial and residential structures built in the local vernacular style. Providing sidewalk edges and traffic-calming measures throughout the community creates walkable connectivity, making this a shared space between pedestrians and automobiles. Improved crosswalk connections would also be introduced to other parts of the city as well as a new pathway to the primary greenway to the north, Pitt's Park.

Using the citizen's priorities as our guide, other viable opportunities were identified throughout downtown. A recurring theme became evident through the public input process: the people of Clarkesville love to walk for exercise, leisure, and shopping. The



*Before and after:  
Infill building on  
Washington Street*



*Before and after:  
Walkable Section of  
Monroe Street*



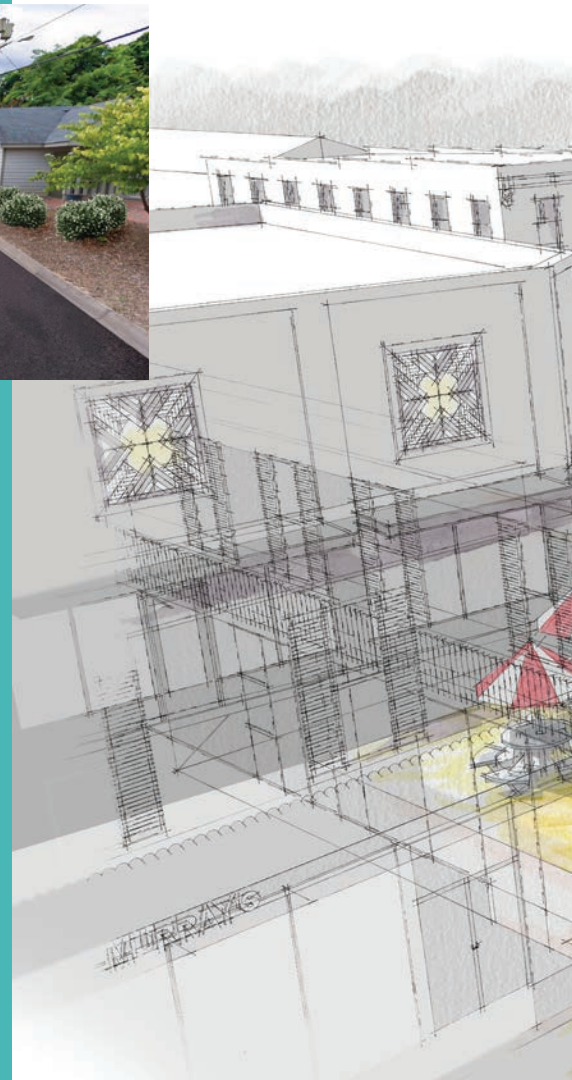
## **BENEFITS AND GOALS OF A NEW COURTHOUSE SQUARE COMMUNITY**

Shift the gravitational center of downtown to a new walkable activity hub consisting of a central park square surrounded by storefronts, wide sidewalks, and smaller plazas.

Surround the new square with a dense mix of retail and residential to increase land values.

Provide new and accessible retail, food service, office, and residential opportunities.

Prioritize walkability while still providing ample parking throughout the downtown area.





citizens already see their downtown as walkable and would like to continue to improve its walkable infrastructure. An initial step was to conduct an existing inventory of walkability throughout the downtown district.

Next, we identified key stretches of street that could be improved with essential sidewalk treatments and plant installations per the example on Monroe Street. In this case, there was already a public parking lot and restroom behind the town center; however, this section of street lacked a sense of connection to downtown. The addition of sidewalks, a repaved street, and signage would encourage people to use these essential amenities for visitors.

An overwhelming majority of the Clarkesville community made a point to try and keep the youth from leaving Clarkesville by listening to their needs. As requested specifically by a focus group of 23 students from neighboring Habersham Central High School, we took advantage of an empty lot directly in the heart of downtown Clarkesville and imagined a conceivable yogurt shop and candy store. This proposed infill development serves as a straightforward example of connecting public input to a picture of a future Clarkesville.

In Clarkesville and other towns in Georgia it has been exciting and personally gratifying to hear citizens passionately express their needs,

and play a role in connecting the community input with a tangible vision. More importantly, what has been a personal benefit of my employment with the CVIOG and my work within the RSVP program has been the connection between myself and the Georgia municipalities for which I become intimately involved in developing a future vision.+

*Courthouse Square Perspective,  
Clarkesville, GA*





# HOPE IN HAITI

DESIGNERS AND PRESERVATIONISTS FIND  
COMMUNITY INCLUSION TO BE CRUCIAL AT  
EVERY STAGE OF THE REBUILDING PROCESS

*Kit Candler, MHP 2015*

*Renee' Donnell, MHP 2014*

*Sara Dusenberry, MHP 2015*

*Mikaela L. Urgo, MLA 2008*

*Photos and graphics by authors*

In January 2010, Haiti was hit by a catastrophic earthquake. The town of Leogane was at the epicenter. The earthquake left 80-90% of the country's building stock with devastating physical damage. The loss of life was disastrous as well, and according to United States Geographical Survey (USGS), "Official estimates [report], 316,000 people killed, 300,000 injured, 1.3 million displaced, 97,294 houses destroyed and 188,383 damaged in the Port-au-Prince area and in much of southern Haiti. Other estimates suggest substantially lower numbers of casualties, perhaps as low as fewer than 100,000." The devastation and destruction in Haiti was still evident four years later when we joined a group of 30+ students from four universities, humanitarian consultants, and faculty for a two week intensive study evaluating housing interventions.

In response to the tragedy in 2010, humanitarian aid from various international organizations arrived swiftly to provide basic needs including shelter, food, and water. The shelters provided immediately after the earthquake were temporary, and most often tents. After the initial response, many aid organizations provided more permanent solutions through the use of transitional shelters (T-shelters). In Leogane, the T-shelters were often designed with solid concrete bases, plywood siding, and corrugated metal roofing to allow for future alterations. Our group partnered with Habitat for Humanity (HFH) to evaluate their housing interventions in two Leogane communities.

Santo and Nolivós are two small communities in which HFH focused their relief efforts. Santo, a green field site, and Nolivós, an existing community, were provided assistance through the construction of homes and income-generating training. In order to evaluate the housing efforts made by HFH we used Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) tools to engage with community members and gather information. As a result, we developed a set of recommendations for HFH that included details for housing design, community planning, the importance of public space, and the provision of alternative livelihood opportunities in our final report.

Using PRA tools, we were able to work with community members to understand how they were affected by HFH's shelter and livelihood interventions. PRA is a form of data gathering most often used by non-governmental organizations (NGO) and agencies focused on international development. Robert Chambers, who is credited as a founder of the PRA process, promotes that the approach owes much to "the Freirian theme, that poor and exploited people can and should be enabled to analyze their own reality." This method allows community members to be directly involved in the planning and development of programs affecting them. PRA makes use of a number of tools including mapping, semi-structured interviews, daily schedules, and preference ranking to derive information. The use of these tools enables community members to relay their own concerns and circumstances. In addition, PRA allows easier information sharing when language and cultural barriers exist, and also enables people to begin dialogues about their own communities.

With the help of PRA tools, we were able to collect a breadth of information and gain insight into the lives and recovery status of those living in Santo and Nolivós. Their stories became the heart of the report and guided us in making our recommendations to HFH. From these stories, we learned how residents have used the skills gained through the HFH training to begin rebuilding their lives.



*Top:  
Berlyne, a translator, helps Kattellie, a Santo resident, use a PRA tool that identified and ranked items of importance. Students used this tool to gather information from a local women's group.*

*Above:  
Benito, a Santo community member, works with Ricot, a Santo community leader, on a PRA exercise that visually compared and conveyed assets.*

*Opposite:  
Leogane residents hanging out at the barber shop. This HFH T-shelter was converted into a business, a good sign that the community is adapting the structures to fit their needs.*



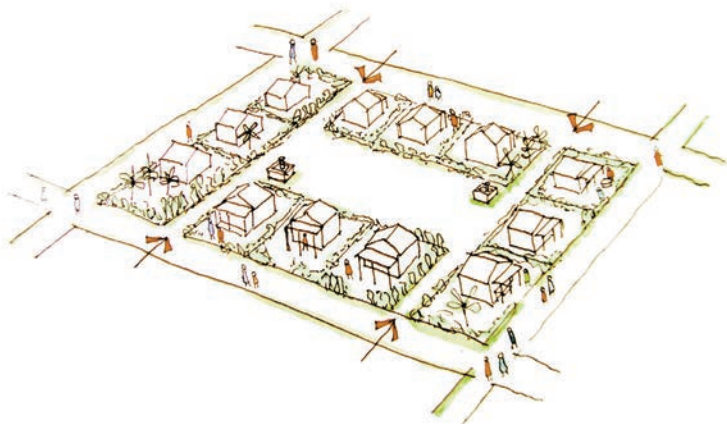
*A group of men identify needs through the use of PRA tools. Sometimes, separating gender can help to empower more people to participate in the PRA process.*

36-year old Kattelie is among the many residents empowered by HFH's efforts to support herself and her family. Kattelie established a small sewing and clothing business in her home in Santo. As part of her business, she received a contract with the local school to provide student uniforms for the community. Much of the money she earns from sewing helps pay for her own children's school fees, and has allowed her to begin building an outdoor kitchen extension. In addition to providing for herself and family, Kattelie's skills have also helped other women in the village build upon their own skills, especially those in a local handicraft group. Kattelie's story is one of many we heard that illustrates the positive impact HFH has had on this village, and how learning a single skill can begin to improve individual lives and impact the greater community.

Throughout the process of using PRA tools, we were reminded to keep the individual and his or her experience at the forefront of our research assessment. Many times this was achieved through the simple act of giving people the opportunity to be heard. Although NGOs and other humanitarian aid organizations are often limited by funding, deadlines, existing infrastructure, and other resources, their efforts are meaningless without the inclusion of the individual. We know this is also at the core of what we do as designers and planners, but in a post-disaster area, community inclusion is even more crucial at every stage of the rebuilding process.

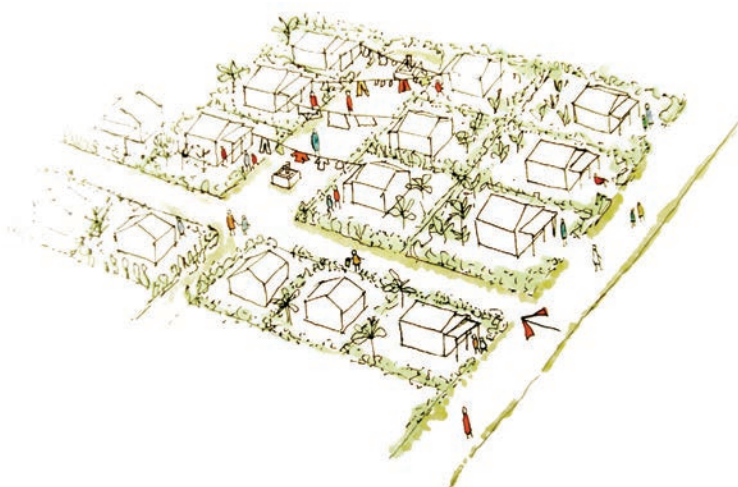
Although this natural disaster only directly affected one small island nation, the recovery and humanitarian response were international. Climate change is affecting every nation and ultimately altering the way we live. Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) are the titles we are using to prepare, plan, and redesign for these changing times. In many places worldwide, municipalities are required to have a DRRMP (Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plan) to not only reduce the risk for potential future threats, but also to have a response action plan in place. This is an extremely important document to have and to update regularly, especially in areas with vulnerable populations prone to natural and man-made disasters. These plans act as a basic 'roadmap' to recovery in an often chaotic time and can also help to organize and prioritize both domestic and international aid relief efforts.

All people are tasked with the responsibility to be stewards of the land and thus it is our collective responsibility to not only actively respond in times of crises, but also to challenge ourselves as designers, planners, and preservationists to prepare for our changing world. +



#### SANTO - Block A

In this type of block the houses face away from the large communal space in the center. Apart from people going there to collect water from the two wells, the space appears otherwise unused. It is clear that people tend to spend more time in their gardens and on their front porches, facing the street.



#### SANTO - Block B

Here, a narrow path leads you away from the street and into a different type of shared space—an alleyway where the houses face each other. This layout encourages interaction between the neighbors and results in a more frequent use of the space. Clothes lines are hung between the houses and people can be seen chatting. The spaces are more human in scale than those in Block A, which creates a sense of intimacy.



#### NOVILOS - Ka Yo Yo

This community has grown naturally over time. The layout of the houses is integrated with the trees and vegetation, and the lack of demarcation of each house's garden results in the merging of all outdoor space, creating a strong sense of community. People can often be found congregating under the shade of the tall, mature trees.



# DIVERSIFYING PLACE

## HOW FOREIGN LANDSCAPES MIGHT INFORM OUR PERCEPTIONS OF HOME

*Genna Mason, MLA 2016*  
*Photos by author*

As landscape architects, planners, and preservationists, it is essential that we become keen observers of our surroundings. A deeper understanding of place, or the history, function, and character that make a location unique, requires a multi-sensory analysis. Sight, smell, sound, taste, and feel collectively are senses that weave the experiential fabric of a place. One way to improve our observational skills and diversify our design palette is through travel.

During spring 2014, I participated in the University of Georgia's multidisciplinary Croatia study abroad program. While traveling through Croatia for five weeks, a group of undergraduate and graduate students from different schools within the university took classes in contemporary art, public health, Slavic studies, and heritage conservation. We visited different regions in Croatia that each had a distinctive character. We traveled to cities that are representative of those regional distinctions, including Zagreb, Split, Pula, and Dubrovnik.



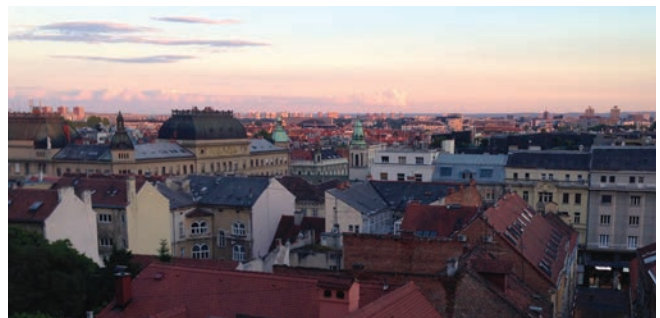
In addition to the heritage conservation course, I developed an independent study course under the guidance of Dr. James Reap. The theme for this course was reading the Croatian landscape. The course required me to make conscious and intentional observations of my surroundings, which often inspired questions about what I observed. I constantly asked myself of my surroundings: What is happening here and why? Who is using this space? How are they using it? An exploration of the five senses conveyed answers toward a deeper understanding and appreciation of my surroundings. Additionally, observing the reactions of my travel companions, many of whom had

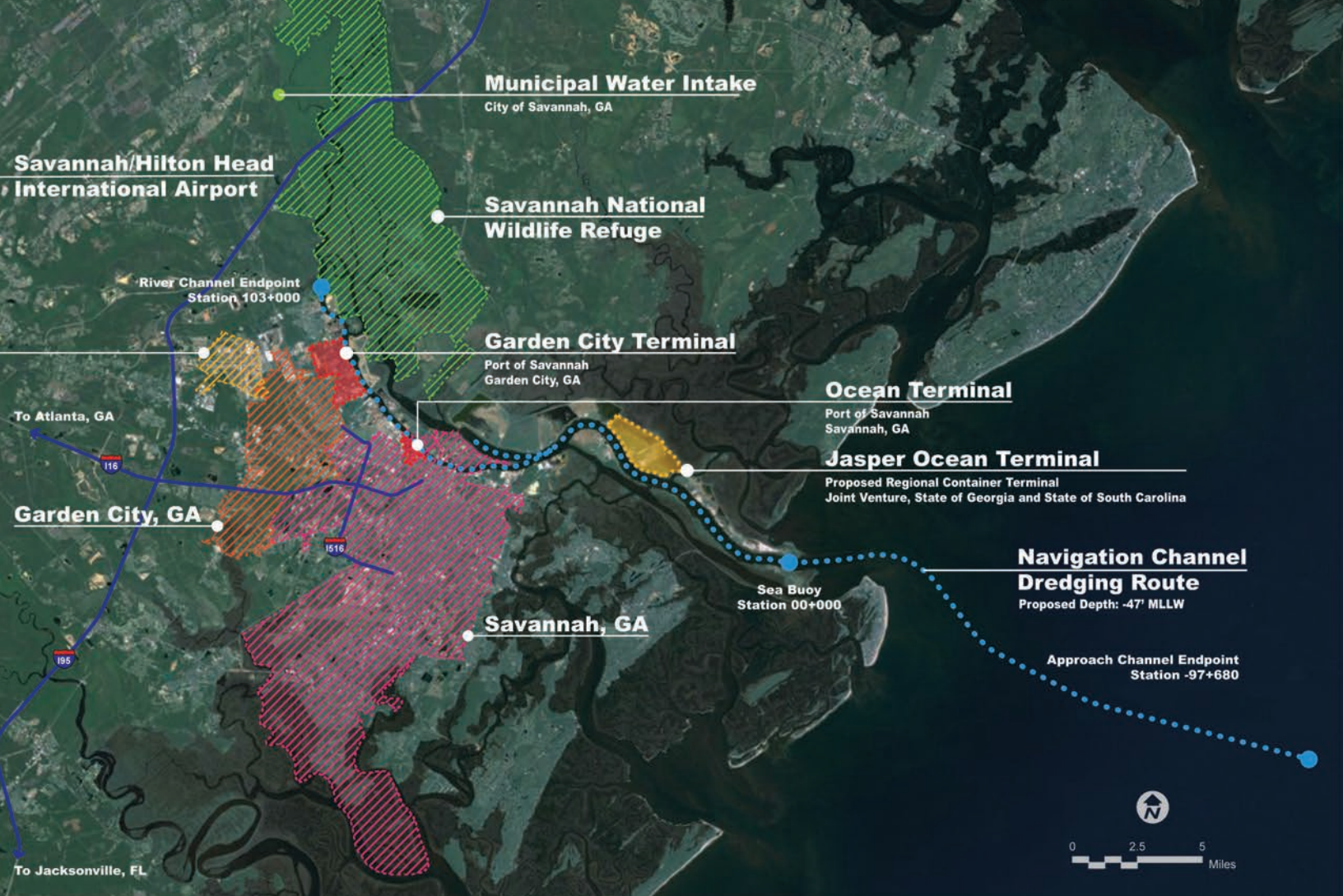


*Clockwise from top:  
View of Makarska;  
Rooftops in Split;  
Zagreb skyline;  
Harbor in Dubrovnik;  
Barns in the Žumberak-Samoborsko Gorje Nature Park*

never traveled abroad, was another informative source for understanding place. My own reactions upon returning to the United States were a third source for understanding both the places that I had visited and the place to which I had returned.

Travel not only helps us diversify our design palette, but it also creates connections to place and strengthens our understanding of place. When we experience a new place, we absorb information through our heightened and active senses; when we return to known places, we see them differently with a fresh perspective. +





# SAVANNAH HARBOR EXPANSION PROJECT

THE EXPANSION OF SAVANNAH'S PORT COULD PROVIDE A MUCH NEEDED MODEL FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, COORDINATION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION IN LARGE-SCALE GEOTECHNICAL INTERVENTIONS

*Stephen J. Ramos, Assistant Professor*  
*Graphics by author*



With the expansion of the Panama Canal, port cities along the U.S. Eastern Seaboard—from New York to Miami to Houston—are competing to attract the increased trade expected with the project’s completion in late 2015. Post-*Panamax* ships, which have a 50-foot draft and a 12,500-TEU container capacity, will pass through the expanded canal, but of the above-mentioned ports, only Norfolk currently has the channel depth and landside infrastructure to receive them. East Coast ports are now either executing or proposing projects that include port expansion, dredging, and multimodal transportation development for greater hinterland connectivity, which are estimated at a total cost of \$20 billion. Ninety percent of world trade volumes move by sea, and an American Association of Port Authorities report shows that in 2011 U.S. ports generated more than 13 million direct and indirect jobs, \$650 billion in personal income, and \$212 billion in U.S. federal, state, and local

taxes. With the majority of the U.S. population living in coastal regions, and a strong correlation between per capita income and coastal proximity, it is clear that efficient, frictionless port functions and their ancillary activities are closely tied to the larger macro-economic health of the country.

One of the competing ports is in Savannah, Georgia, which is located approximately 18 miles inland from the mouth of the Savannah River. The Port of Savannah is the country’s fourth busiest container port and the second busiest on the Eastern Seaboard after the Port of New York and New Jersey. Savannah’s port has achieved this success in spite of the fact that its 42-foot channel depth is the shallowest of North America’s top fifteen ports, and the port has received less state and federal funding than any other East Coast port. This earned the port recognition in the Collier International 2012 Port Awards as the port that offers

“success for less.” Savannah is an export center for goods throughout the Southeast, and it is essentially the port of Atlanta in terms of its imports destination.

The port is about to embark on the \$706 million Savannah Harbor Expansion Project (SHEP), which will dredge 32 miles of the Savannah Harbor navigation channel, which is comprised of 18 miles of the Savannah River downstream to its mouth, and 14 miles of the Atlantic Ocean entrance channel. This will increase the channel depth from 42 to 47 feet to attract and accommodate Post-*Panamax* ships. Georgia has made it clear that SHEP is the state’s highest trade infrastructure priority, and after fifteen years of protracted negotiation, everything is now in place for the project to move forward.

Research conducted by CED professor Dr. Stephen J. Ramos explores the geographic coastal impacts of port competition, and looks at the unique

Right:  
Eastern U.S.  
deepwater ports map

Opposite:  
Savannah Harbor  
Expansion map

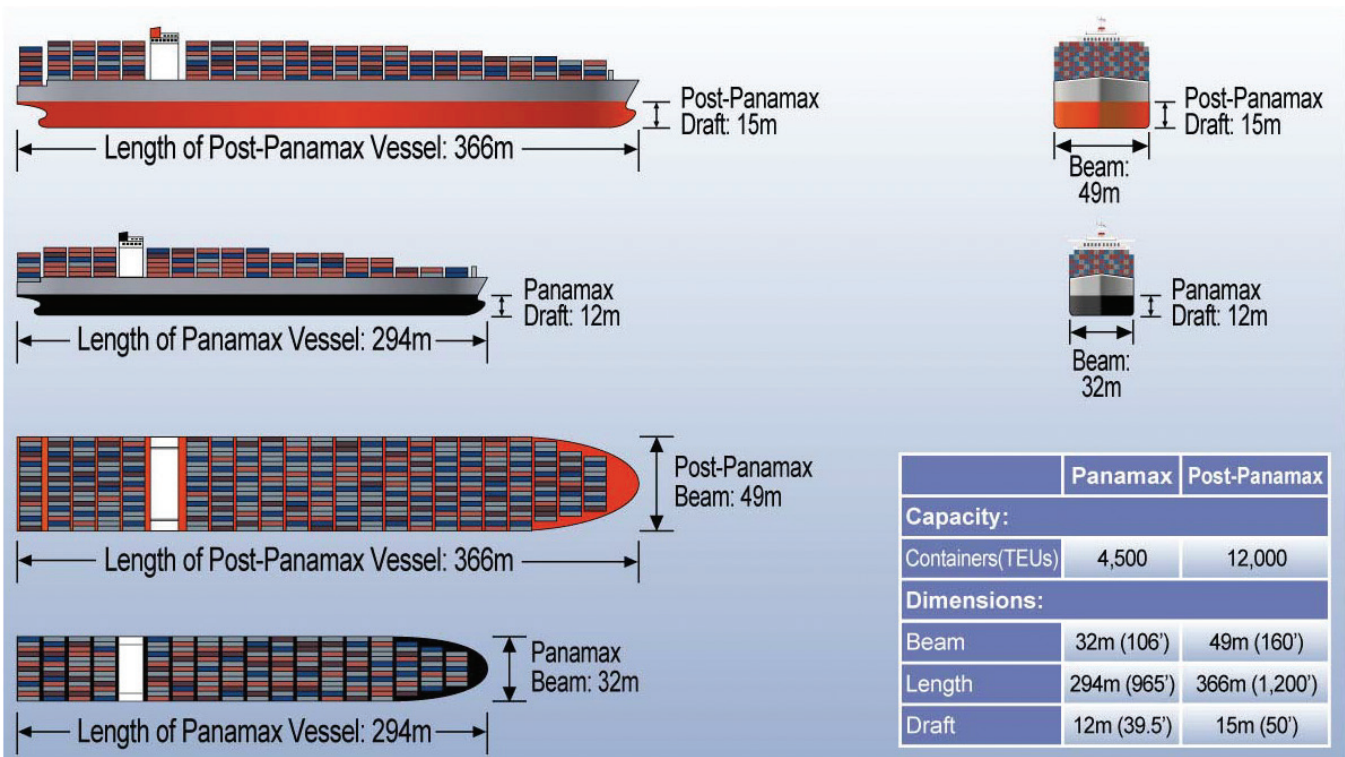




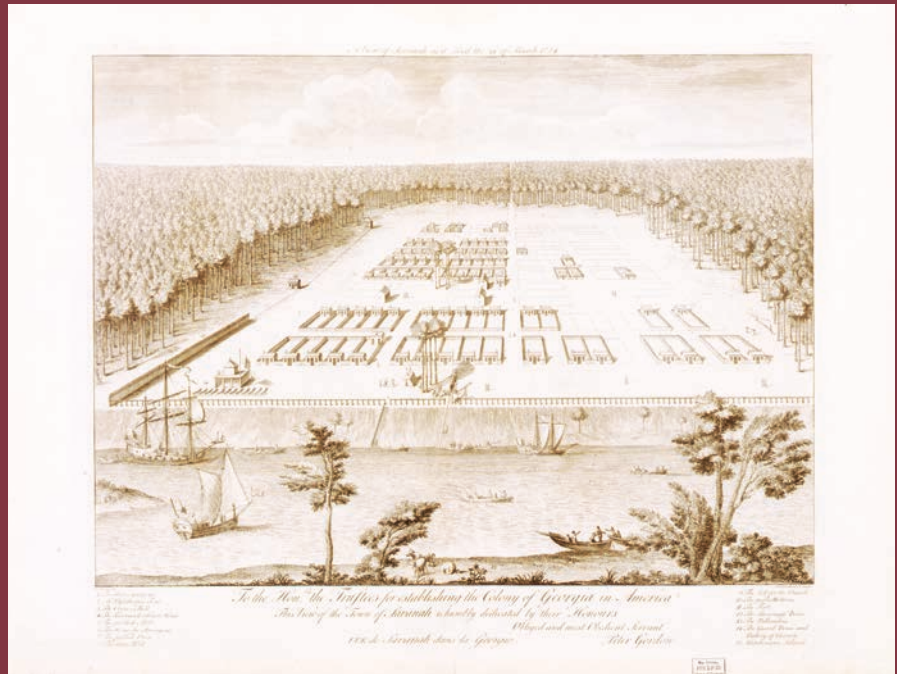
circumstances of the Greater Savannah Metropolitan Region in planning for future growth of its port. It also considers the larger U.S. trade and infrastructure policies that frame the country's port competition and proposes recommendations for national port strategy that would establish more rigorous economic and environmental risk assessment for port expansion projects.

This case study illustrates the tensions of uncoordinated maritime freight and logistics planning with fragile coastal and riparian ecologies that are complicated by historic, entrenched economic geography. Dramatic interventions in port excavation demonstrate how global forces of technological change and port expansions in other parts of the world are reshaping local port geographies.

The engineering ability, funding, and leadership are often readily available when embarking on large-scale geotechnical interventions in the service of international trade. The Panama Canal and its current expansion serve as an excellent example, but strategic planning, multi-level governmental coordination, and comprehensive environmental considerations that include responsive monitoring are more elusive. The hope is that as SHEP moves forward, as all suggests it will, these considerations will also be included in the project. +



Clockwise from right:  
 A view of Savannah as it stood  
 the 29th of March, 1734,  
 image courtesy of The Library of Congress  
 Prints and Photographs Division;  
 Panamax/Post Panamax  
 container vessels diagram,  
 image courtesy of Panama Canal Authority;  
 A container vessel



## SOURCES

"A twenty-foot equivalent unit (or TEU) is an inexact unit of cargo capacity used to describe the capacity of container ships. It is based on the volume of a 20-foot long shipping container, a standard-sized metal box which can be easily transferred between ships, trains and trucks." Knight, K. 2008. The Implications of Panama Canal Expansion to U.S. Ports and Coastal Navigation Economic Analysis. IWC White Paper. U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources. (Dec). p.6

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# DRAWING ON CHIP SULLIVAN

CED STUDENTS REVISIT THE ART OF QUICK SKETCHING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

*Thomas Baker, MLA 2015*  
*Photos by author*

Landscape architecture students are in the midst of a watercolor renaissance—yes, watercolor is sexy again. The medium is quick, easy to layer, and useful for conveying emotion. Students are becoming increasingly aware of the value of analogue media when hybridized in Photoshop, so hand drawing actually feels relevant again because of digital tools.

All over the world sketchers are gathering together to draw their environments. Two years ago the American Society of Landscape Architects started offering a sketch outing in conjunction with its annual meeting. There are now even websites that link groups of enthusiasts in cities worldwide for annual all-day sketch meetings. So, when students at the College of Environment + Design decided to join the watercolor and sketch revolution, we invited Chip Sullivan—landscape architecture professor at UC Berkeley, author, and avid supporter of hand drawing—to come along on a sketch crawl through Athens and show us a thing or two.

In November 2014, Sullivan led a group of 30 landscape architecture students through a weekend of landscape drawing and watercolor rendering. The group started the

weekend by sketching architecture in an urban setting. Saturday's drawing session focused on the vegetation found in abandoned light industrial sites close to the Jackson Street Building. Each planned stop along the sketch crawl lasted roughly 20 minutes, encouraging participants to capture the site quickly and from several different perspectives. After we had each filled a six-page accordion-style sketchbook with images of Athens, Sullivan demonstrated how to quickly enhance our field drawings with watercolor rendering techniques. At the end of the workshop the completed sketchbooks were displayed for a group critique session.

The sketch crawl is a fantastic exercise and can be useful for discovering a sense of place during the design process, and watercolor is an effective way to enhance both process drawings and final renderings. Practicing quick hand graphics in the field heightens a designer's visual awareness, which is something that students commented on while experiencing the landscape with a practiced drawer like Chip Sullivan. Drawing on Sullivan's expertise, we were able to see, sketch, and color the landscapes around us in a new way.+



Clockwise from above:  
MLA student Ying Chen  
captures an Athens storefront  
in watercolor; Workshop  
participants sketch on-site;  
Chip Sullivan instructs students  
in the art of sketching.

Opposite:  
The sketch crawl route through  
Athens

*Ying Chen*  
11.08.2016







Tiany Dong  
11/8/14.



Tiany Dong  
11/8/14.



Xuran Zou  
11/8/2014



Xuran Zou  
11/8/2014

Work created by CED students during the Chip Sullivan sketch and watercolor workshop

Above:  
Tiany Dong, MLA 2015

Left:  
Xuran Zou, MLA 2015

Opposite, top:  
Genna Mason, MLA 2016

# CONNECTING

## DATA + DISCIPLINES + DISTURBED HYDROLOGY

AS PART OF HIS MEPD PRACTICUM A CED STUDENT WORKS WITH AMERICAN RIVERS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AT HARTSFIELD-JACKSON ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO PERFORM A LAND-SUITABILITY STUDY FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

*Andrew Bailey MLA 2014, MEPD 2015  
Photos and graphics by author*

Green infrastructure planning at the busiest airport in the world is an exercise that requires an intimate and ongoing understanding of the complex systems that interact on the 4,700-acre site. Much of my work with American Rivers and the Department of Sustainability at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport has been, and continues to be, an attempt at identifying and mapping these systems and then understanding how they might interact or influence one another across spatial and temporal scales. The suitability maps produced as a result of this study indicate some key areas for further investigation and are a critical tool for planners, engineers, and decision makers at the airport. However, the process of obtaining and documenting knowledge of the interactions of the physical environment as well as the regulatory, political, and fiscal environment is ongoing and non-linear. The compilation and integration of all these data types continues to reveal more about how distributed green infrastructure systems for stormwater management can be successfully implemented. This process is, in essence, the vehicle through which the design of distributed green infrastructure systems will be realized at the airport.

While the airport's existing grey stormwater infrastructure accomplishes the chief goals associated with urban stormwater management, establishing stormwater systems that more closely mimic natural hydrology is particularly important at the airport because the headwaters of the Flint River are actually piped underneath the airport in a large concrete culvert. Contemporary thinking regarding urban stormwater management focuses increasingly on designing systems for infiltration

rather than for peak runoff detention, thereby addressing a far greater number of rain events more effectively. By virtue of its location, Hartsfield-Jackson is poised to make significant contributions to water quality and subsurface return flows through green infrastructure practices. Identifying ways to integrate green infrastructure systems with the existing grey infrastructure systems at the airport is a key strategy as the airport seeks to reconcile its economic and environmental goals.

I will preface the rest of this article by emphasizing that the process of green infrastructure planning is ongoing and non-linear. The first reason is that the systems at the airport are dynamic and subject to change, and thus require a planning and management approach that can adapt and accommodate new datasets. The second reason is an attempt to deter readers from falling into the trap of believing without question the results of GIS suitability mapping. A weighted overlay analysis was chosen because it provides a transparent way to synthesize and understand the interactions of multiple criteria through mapping—even if only for a snapshot in time. The analysis is critical, yet only one step in a planning process that is projective, iterative, and adaptive. What is important to remember is that design and creativity often thrive in the shadows of what is not currently possible and thus areas shown to be unsuitable for green infrastructure may eventually become highly suitable through design and new technologies. This point is perhaps best exemplified by the more recent history of the development of brownfield sites. These sites were long thought unsuitable for development, yet through design and creative thinking, a multitude of strategies have been devised for their remediation and development.

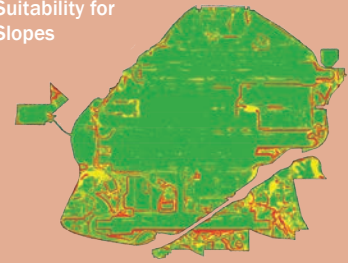


*Right:  
Five criteria were  
mapped, weighted, and  
combined to produce a  
comprehensive green  
infrastructure suitability  
map.*

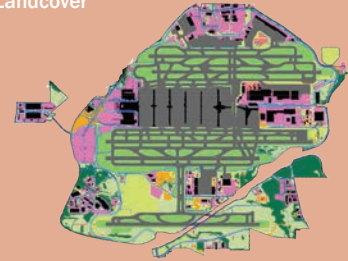
The methods employed in this study provide a flexible framework that enables decision-makers to make informed planning decisions on siting green infrastructure. The method of analysis was chosen because it provides a transparent way to combine the complex layers of information present on the airport site such as geomorphology, land cover, and regulatory environments. Furthermore, through the use of a GIS-based model, additional data can be added as it becomes available or updated, and new suitability scenarios can be generated based upon a variety of criteria valuations. Additionally, this process helps identify the key types of information needed for decision makers as planning progresses.

The first step in the process identified the factors that would have a significant effect on the land suitability for green infrastructure. Not all of the criteria initially identified were applied in the suitability study; however, identifying a comprehensive list of criteria was a critical step in the approach. Criteria that were eventually excluded from the suitability analysis proved useful for general site analysis and evaluation. Excluded criteria also aided in identifying important data needed for future analyses. The second step in the process involved the development of a GIS database with spatial data on the identified criteria. Next, individual criteria suitability maps were created and their values were reclassified to a scale of “1 to 9 by 1”(low numbers represent low suitability and higher numbers represent higher suitability). This process allowed for a greater nuance of values in the individual criteria maps with each suitability level (high, medium, and low) now containing three levels of value. The following step of the process involved the weighted overlay analysis, where weights were applied to the model to indicate the relative importance of the criteria and sub-criteria. Application of weighting was determined by assessing how the data was derived and its potential implications for the siting of green infrastructure. Once the comprehensive suitability map was generated, it was then evaluated through the lens of the project goals and the future development plans of the airport. Potential pilot sites were identified and a list of green infrastructure BMP's for each site was recommended. All of the potential sites were then prioritized as short, medium, or long-term goals for the airport.

Suitability for Slopes



Suitability for Landcover



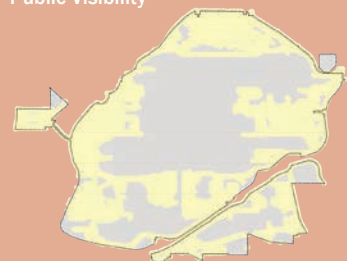
Suitability for FAA Regulations



Suitability for Existing Open Drainage Swales



Suitability for Public Visibility



The results of the land suitability analysis demonstrate a high degree of potential for green infrastructure implementation based on the analyzed criteria of slope, land cover (includes vegetation and impervious cover types), FAA regulations, open drainage swales, and public visibility. The criteria used in this analysis indicate the most optimum and least optimum locations for the implementation of a broad variety of green infrastructure practices for stormwater management. While a lack of accurate soil and water table data limits the capability of the analysis to address specific requirements for the variety of green infrastructure practices that now exist, the analysis performed provides valuable information and a starting point for airport planners as they investigate the potential pilot sites for green infrastructure. Furthermore, after familiarizing the GIS staff at the airport with how the GIS model operates and suggesting high priority areas and methods for future data collection, I am hopeful that the model will be revisited and updated to generate new suitability scenarios. It is important to note that utilizing the GIS model in this way maximizes its benefit throughout the planning process.

My findings from the suitability analysis were published in a report with American Rivers for the airport. Next steps identified by the report refer to several spatial and temporal scales. At the scale of the entire airport, detailed runoff calculations reflecting updated land cover are recommended. This data can be evaluated against the acreage of suitable land indicated by the suitability analysis, as well as the areas indicated for future development in the master plan. The data must also be evaluated alongside the existing stormwater infrastructure and policy goals for runoff reduction. Once this occurs, the airport can successfully begin to design and understand how a distributed network of green infrastructure systems can function for the entire site. Concurrently, and at a smaller scale, the report recommends detailed site analysis, design, and implementation of pilot sites. The pilot sites are identified by short, medium, and long-term priority. Pilot sites identified as short-term are thought to be “low-hanging fruit” or sites that could be implemented with relative ease and minimal investment. Once implemented, these short-term priority pilot sites would be monitored for performance to gain valuable knowledge that can be used to adapt the specific plans for the medium and longer-term priority areas as well as overall plans for the distributed green infrastructure system.

Initial presentations of this study internally at the airport have been well received. Aside from the purely spatial analysis, the study has generated discussion of ways to standardize the format of data provided by outside consultants so it can be more broadly interpreted and seamlessly included in the airport GIS database. Interest in understanding and documenting the economic benefits of green infrastructure, particularly regarding the reduction of stormwater management fees through the incorporation of more impervious surfaces, was also discussed. The creation of an internal task force comprised of planners, engineers, environmentalists, and GIS analysts was another idea that hopefully will gain traction. Lastly, there is discussion of creating policies that define a measurable goal for runoff reduction and require the consideration of green infrastructure on all new construction. The use of land suitability analysis has proven to be a critical tool at several stages in a non-linear planning process. Its ability to analyze multiple types of complex data and then project varying suitability outcomes through GIS modeling combined with the interdisciplinary discourse generated by this process is quite remarkable. For these reasons, GIS modeling is certainly worth consideration as an analysis and communication tool when working on large land planning projects that involve complex systems and multiple disciplines. +



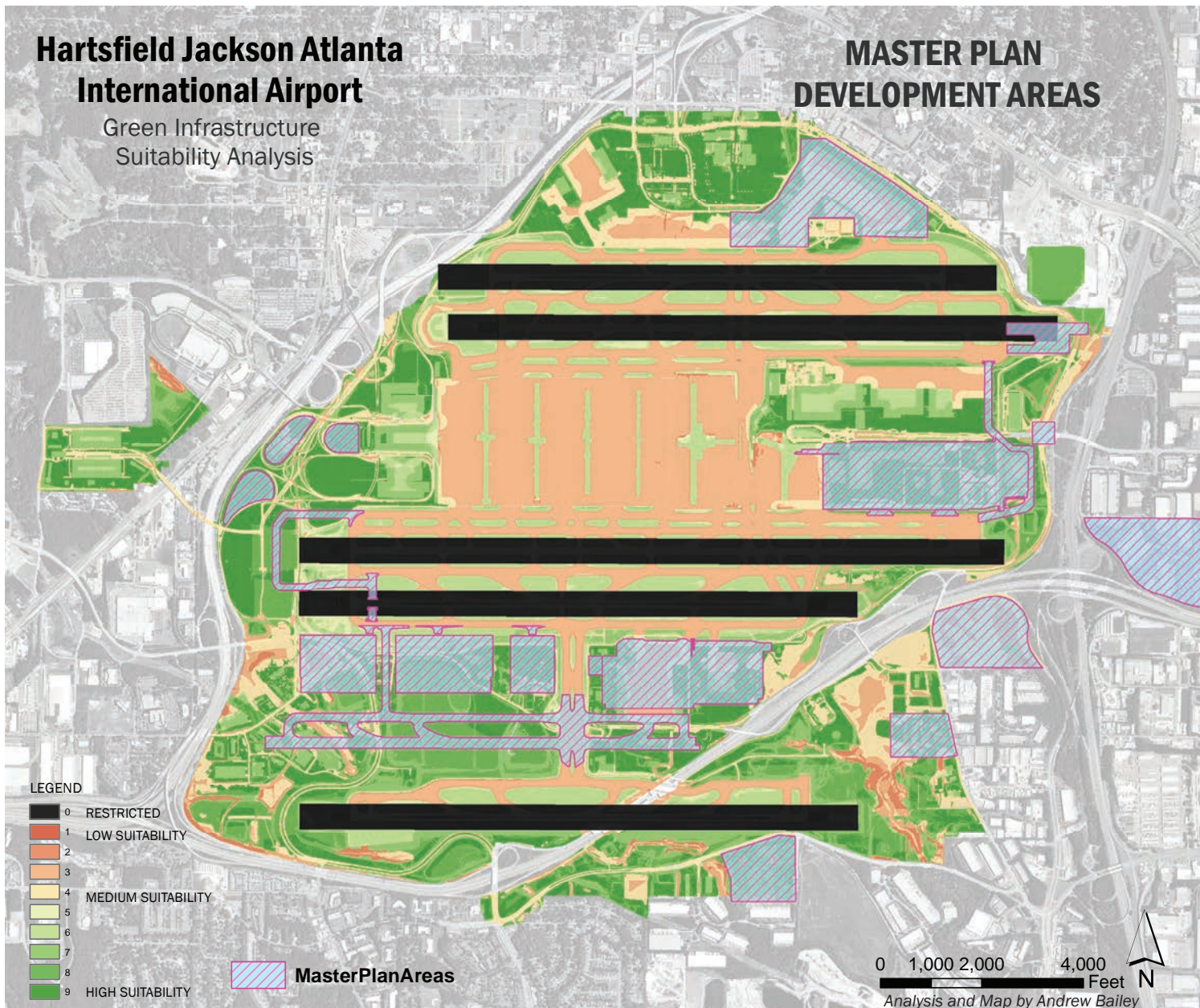
Below:

Approximately 38% of the site was found to have high suitability values of 7, 8, and 9. Additionally, 24% was found to be moderately suitable. Areas with low suitability comprise 23% of the site.

Runway safety areas were restricted from the analysis and comprise 15% of the site.

Opposite:

The headwaters of the Flint River are piped underneath the airport in a large concrete culvert.



# PRESERVING THE PAST DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE

HOW A HISTORIC HOME BECAME A TEACHING TOOL FOR MULTIPLE GENERATIONS OF CED STUDENTS

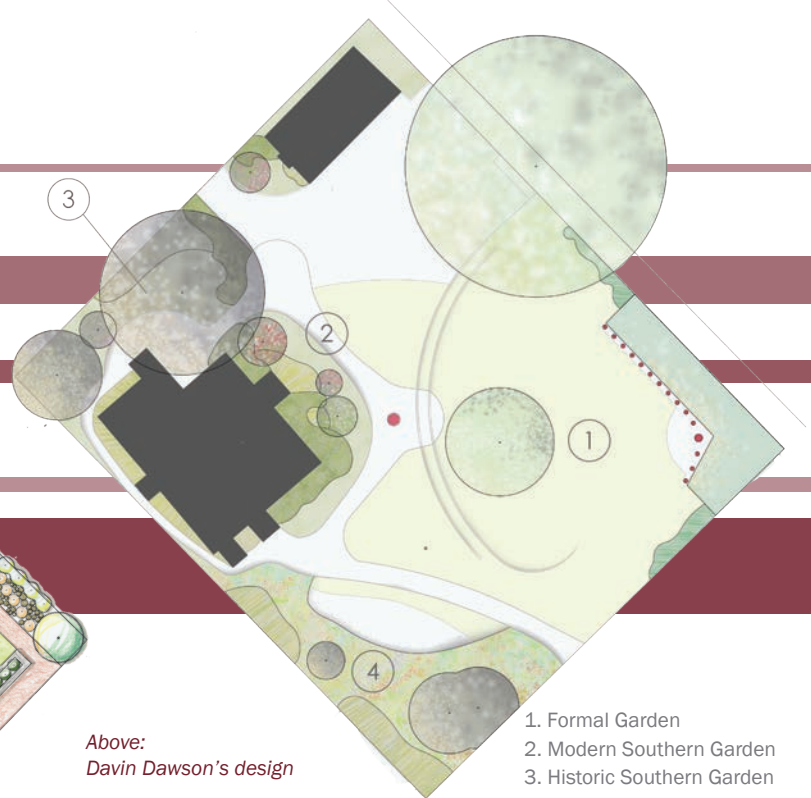
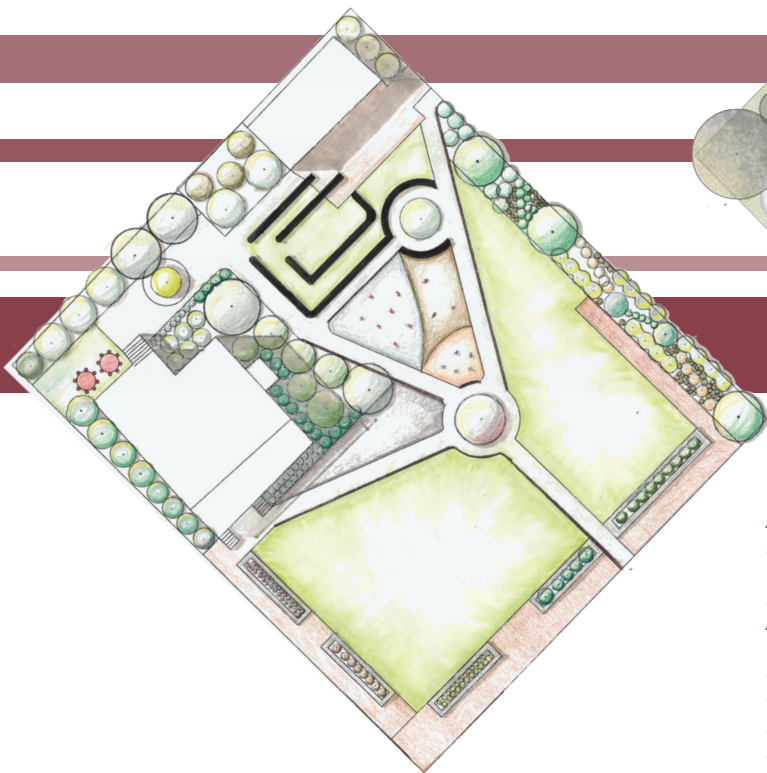
*Rebecca Katherine Croft, MHP 2015*

In 1776, George Walton was one of three men from Georgia to sign the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. Walton, the second youngest signer, would go on to become a noted judge and governor of the state of Georgia. His home, Meadow Garden, is the only home of a Georgia signer still standing, and is the oldest standing structure in Augusta, Georgia. The National State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution saved and purchased the house in 1899 before the Georgia State Society Daughters of the American Revolution acquired the deed in 1960. Ten years later, John Waters, founder of the College of Environment + Design's Historic Preservation Program, led students in the creation of a landscape plan for the property. Thus began the CED's enduring relationship with Meadow Garden.

Over the years, the physical copy of the landscape plan designed by Professor Waters' class was lost. Therefore, State Regent Ida "Bea" Best Fischer and Meadow Garden Board Landscape Chairman Deborah Powell began research to create a new master landscape plan for preserving this cultural landscape. Powell reached out to the CED in hopes of obtaining a copy of the original plan,

but when no copy could be found the College put Powell in touch with Professor Brian Cook. Professor Cook proposed a competition in which students from his third year BLA design studio would each create a comprehensive landscape design for Meadow Garden, focusing on plant material. The Board presented this idea to Derek Vanover of LanDraft Landscape Design and Consultation, who had





*Above:*  
Davin Dawson's design

*Left:*  
Anderson Price's design

*Opposite:*  
George Walton's home, Meadow Garden;  
Photo courtesy of Georgia State Society  
NSDAR

1. Formal Garden
2. Modern Southern Garden
3. Historic Southern Garden
4. Victorian Herb Garden



been selected as the professional landscape architect in charge of designing a new landscape plan for the site. Vanover was excited about the opportunity the competition presented for landscape architecture students, and was willing to incorporate the best ideas the students developed into his master landscape plan. The students in the class and local stakeholders held two separate votes for the best design. Davin Dawson won the stakeholder vote for his design incorporating historically significant plants and a layout best suited to the current function of the space, and the student vote went to Anderson Price's design. Both of these students created thoughtful designs that displayed an understanding of what was historically important to keep in the current landscape and what should be reimaged.

Meanwhile, the Meadow Garden Board realized they did not have accurate records regarding the house's history. This was ideal work for a graduate intern. As a member of the Georgia State Society Daughters of the American Revolution, I was hired as the initial researcher. I found copies of the National Historic Landmarks Program Nomination and the National Register of Historic Places

Nomination. Upon obtaining these documents I recognized several mistakes regarding the landscaping and house plan. I researched deeds, parish land records, and tax assessments. I also incorporated the dissertation of Dr. Edwin C. Bridges, a biography of George Walton, in order to present a more complete and accurate history of the property. As a Georgia Daughter I have had the opportunity to continue working with Meadow Garden by updating and correcting its National Register Nomination including the landscape, per the recommendations of the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office.

The Meadow Garden project provided a unique opportunity for landscape architecture students to interact with another generation of students' design, and my participation helped connect the project to an even more distant time in history. The CED's long-term relationship with Meadow Garden is a prime example of the benefits of preservationists and designers working together to rejuvenate cultural landscapes, while being ever-mindful of the significance of what is already there. +

1790

1800

1810

1820

1830

1840

1850

1860

1870

1880

1890

# HISTORICAL ECOLOGY MAPPING PROJECT

CEG FACULTY AND STUDENTS INVESTIGATE ATHENS THROUGH THE AGES, SEEKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TIME, ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION, AND OUR COMMUNITY

*Annette Griffin, MLA 2016*

*Tianyi Jiang, MLA 2016*

*Eric MacDonald, Associate Professor*

Athens has shifted, slightly, since the University of Georgia was chartered. Comparing historic topographic maps to contemporary ones, Dr. Eric MacDonald has drawn out some of the elevations side by side, revealing how erosion and grading have smoothed the faces of hills and flattened parts of downtown; a portion of Athens has moved out from under us, and we've shifted. This isn't news to anyone familiar with the Georgia Piedmont. It is widely known that past agricultural practices stripped vegetation in this area, made it more vulnerable to erosion and stormwater runoff, and ultimately impaired its habitat value. What's encouraging, though, is that we're working to recognize the patterns behind the shift.

Dr. MacDonald's work is part of the Historical Ecology Mapping Project, a small independent study group that aspires to map two watersheds within Athens-Clarke County, Tanyard Creek and Lilly Branch, as they may have existed in the year 1785—the year that the University of Georgia was chartered. The project doesn't seem particularly difficult, until one takes into account that 1785 predates any existing historic maps of Athens. Before that time, Creek and Cherokee tribes controlled the

land, and European settlers had yet to define their claims. The University's footprint was tentative, as it did not even include any permanent buildings until the construction of Franklin College in 1806. 1785 marked a time of great change in Athens, not only because of the charter and the development that it would incite, but also because it signaled a shift from the diverse, actively-managed food forests of native people to the monocultural farm land of European settlers. Foreign plants began to replace native species, and a number of plants and animals began to disappear from the landscape. 1785 marked the beginning of a permanent change in the area's ecosystems.

The Historical Ecology Mapping Project was conceived as an investigation into just how much the area's ecosystems have changed over the past 230 years. The effort was initiated by a graduate student during the summer of 2014, and in the fall semester of that year, Master of Landscape Architecture students Annette Griffin, Emily Hunt, Tianyi Jiang, and Genna Mason joined Professor MacDonald in attempting to draw a map of what Athens would have looked like before university development began to shape this community.

Fortunately, our project has academic predecessors, specifically the Mannhatta Project and the Napa Valley Historical Ecology Atlas. Both of these resources informed our methodologies and provided us with inspiration for creative analysis. To get a sense of upland old-growth forests, we visited Fernbank Forest, a remnant patch of a Piedmont forest currently being restored in Atlanta. Breathing in the fragrance of pine needles and walking on spongy soil covered by acorns, we encountered plants like post oak, big leaf magnolia, and strawberry bush. It is sometimes difficult to imagine that 230 years ago Athens had such a blooming and rich forest; that without privet and kudzu, savannah grasses wove an airy understory. We knelt on the ground, turned over fallen leaves, observed sprouts of new seedlings, and witnessed the dynamic network of the wild Piedmont thrumming through a tranquil landscape.

Early on, we also used the comprehensive tome *Natural Communities of Georgia* (The University of Georgia Press, 2013), written by Leslie Edwards, Jonathan Ambrose, and L. Katherine Kirkman, as a starting point for understanding the Tanyard Creek and Lilly Branch ecosystems. This book illustrates “assemblages of interacting species that have either been minimally impacted by modern human activities or have successfully recovered from them.” Over time, however, we began to understand that the communities described in that book are descendants of older assemblages that can never be reproduced. Some of the key pieces of the forests, savannahs, and wetlands of the Tanyard and Lilly Branch watersheds are forever lost. In 1785, for example, flocks of passenger pigeons numbering in the millions (and sometimes billions) roamed the region in search of “mast,” a collective term for various forest nuts. During the winter months, legions of these animals descended upon Piedmont woodlands and oak savannas, sometimes causing limbs of great trees to crash against the forest floor, torn down by the weight of the immense congregations. The forests, whose ecological richness and aesthetic character depended on periodic fires, quickly became covered in the birds’ flammable guano. The passenger pigeon, a locust-like creature in many ways, was thus a keystone species that influenced biodiversity in the area. Its decline, and eventual extinction in captivity in 1914, marked a new era for the ecologies of the Piedmont region.

Since then various descendant systems have emerged, and we may have moved past the point where the fanciful reintroduction of an extinct species could fully restore what has been broken. Perhaps, however, what these communities need in order to be strong, functional, and resilient is analytical and optimistic management. This need informs the Historical Ecology Mapping Project’s mission:

*The Japanese word kintsukuroi describes a broken object being made whole again after its fractures are fused with gold. This joinery acknowledges the object’s history and reveals beauty in the processes of upset and mending. In the spirit of kintsukuroi, we seek to promote an understanding of human impact on the environment by researching and mapping historic land use and ecologies within Athens-Clarke County, Georgia in order to inform creative site management and restoration.*

A single, holistic history of our watersheds will not be generated by our research, no matter how thorough and careful we are. Indeed, our research suggests that the distillation of ecological history into consumable information is, ultimately, the creation of a new cultural narrative, where the sum of parts becomes something altogether different than the parts themselves. In this way, the Historical Ecology Mapping Project’s work mirrors the traits of the ecosystems that it studies: both can be seen as kaleidoscopic expressions of innumerable systemic patterns. The temporal fragility of these patterns is both poignant and inspiring. By determining what could have been possible—and how, when, and why it shifted into what we see today—we can put ourselves in a stronger position to protect what we have, and help it grow into a vibrant, new ecology.+

1790

1800

1810

1820

1830

1840

1850

1860

1870

1880

1890

1

# HISTORICAL ATHENS LAND USE

PREDOMINANTLY PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL, URBAN DEVELOPMENT DOWNTOWN





900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010

*A graphic representation  
of historical Athens  
land use created by  
students participating  
in the Historical Ecology  
Mapping Project*

UNIVERSITY-OWNED AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY, GROWING URBAN DEVELOPMENT

PREDOMINANTLY URBAN

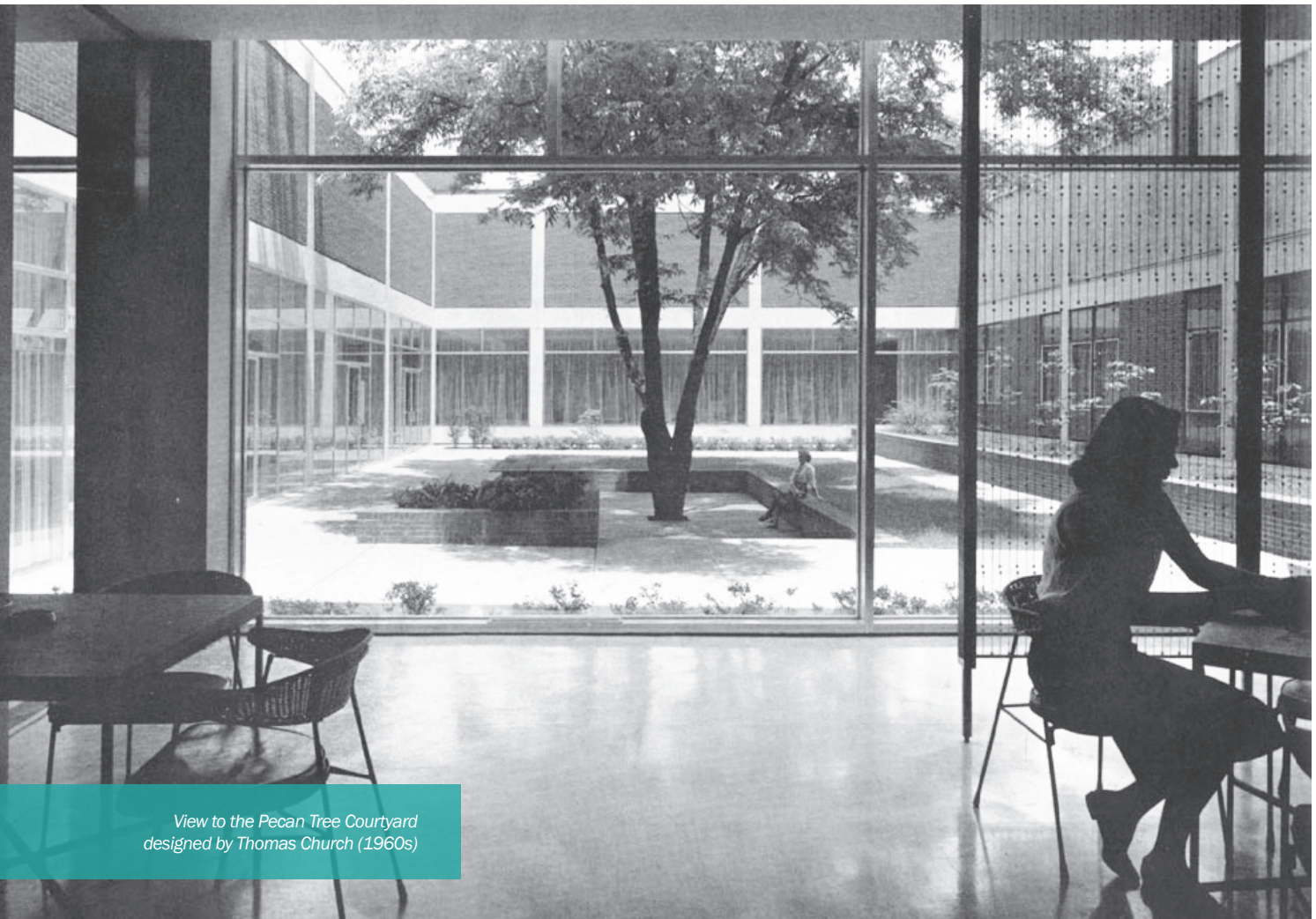


CONNECTING TO THE

# MODERN PAST

SCOTT SIMPSON'S AWARD-WINNING EFFORT  
TO RESTORE A THOMAS CHURCH DESIGN ON  
UGA'S SOUTH CAMPUS

*Melissa Tufts, Director, Owens Library*  
*Photos by Scott Simpson and Kiley Aguar*



*View to the Pecan Tree Courtyard  
designed by Thomas Church (1960s)*

The sporty 1971 Karmann Ghia is one of the last century's most iconic automobiles; rounded and cheerful, the little car cries out for adventure on winding roads of sunny coastlines. Not unlike the curvaceous swimming pool that the landscape architect Thomas Church was so famous for, the Karmann Ghia was fresh, lighthearted, and somewhat playful when it was introduced by Volkswagen. So it's not surprising that landscape designer Scott Simpson treasures his jaunty little sports car. It exudes all that is stylish and optimistic from twentieth century design. Simpson, a graduate of the College of Environment + Design's MLA program and currently Senior Campus Planner for the UGA Office of University Architects, takes this love of design with him at all levels of his life and projects.

"I have a strong appreciation for a great variety of landscape design, but those I truly love are ones that are intuitive—you feel comfortable in the space and don't require a map to interpret or understand it. It always goes back to scale, proportion, form, line, texture, balance, unity—the very basic themes we learn in design school. It's all about harmony, ultimately," Simpson explains.

Simpson's design work was recognized as the "Outstanding Restoration of the Year" by the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation in 2014 for his effort on the Pecan Tree Courtyard at UGA's Center for Continuing Education. Designed by one of the leading lights of mid-century design, Thomas Church, the courtyard and original landscape of the new building incorporated the naturalistic lines created by the drip-lines of the pecan trees. Curving pools of light and meandering paths alerted visitors to the unique setting for the building.



*Above:*  
The Pecan Tree Courtyard at UGA's  
Center for Continuing Education

*Below:*  
Scott Simpson in the  
restored courtyard  
(photo by Kiley Aguar)

While most of the outlying design was compromised by expanding the building in past years, the original Church courtyard has remained an important gathering place for five decades. Simpson says that there was some resistance when he first tried to convince the administration of the historical significance of the courtyard. People didn't realize the importance of the courtyard as a cultural resource. "Who is Thomas Church?" they would ask. Simpson explains that it often takes time and patience to educate a client or user group; he walked a fine line to build consensus that restoration was the right thing to do in this case, rather than tearing the courtyard out and starting over or completely ignoring the original designer's vision.

"Communication is key. You have to be an effective listener and be willing to find different ways to say the same thing." Fortunately, the investment made to restore the courtyard has been successful not only from a preservation perspective, but economically as well. The space is much more utilized than it had been previously and is now a selling feature for guests and conference venues at the hotel.

For many designers, it is often tempting to dive quickly in with enthusiasm and personal vision at a particular location, but for historic sites this can be disastrous. Simpson and his team did tireless research on the courtyard's



Left:  
Original concept drawing for the  
Continuing Education Center

Below:  
View to the courtyard “room” creating the sense  
of outdoor/indoor space (1960s)

Historic images courtesy of  
UGA Office of the University Architects

site as well as the designer: “I read everything I could get my hands on, including oral histories. I looked at earlier campus maps, Sanborn Insurance Maps, old photographs, etc. I wanted to understand how the site got to its present state and what existed prior to development. This informed the design process for me and even charted the direction the project took. My research included discovering as much as I could about Thomas Church as well.”

Built in 1957, in the heart of the pecan groves of UGA’s South Campus, where it starts to blend with the Five Points residential neighborhood, the Continuing Education Building was one of the school’s first Modernist buildings. Simpson felt a deep responsibility to be respectful to the Church design, to salvage portions of the hardscape and planting material that remained relatively unscathed. He wanted to return those aspects that had been compromised over the years, knowing that all landscapes (and campuses) are constantly in flux but also that they benefit from historical context.

Originally from Boston, Thomas Church spent most of his life in California. He was a graduate of UC Berkeley and the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Well-versed in classical traditions, Church nonetheless felt the pull of Modernism and infused his designs with what critics call the California Style. His life spanned 76 years of the twentieth century, from 1902 to 1978, decades that embraced the break from Classical and Neo-Classical design. His work is known and respected internationally for its originality, a truly “American” aesthetic. Perhaps his most famous work is the Donnell garden in Sonoma, California. His book *Gardens are for People* (University of California Press, 1983) is still used today in design education.

Simpson was both intimidated and inspired to work with an original Church design: “There was nothing I had to change that I didn’t want to change. By their nature, landscapes evolve and change over time. We were very fortunate that the original pecan tree—now over 100 years old—





*Left:  
The Pecan Tree Courtyard has become a popular  
gathering place once again (Spring 2014)*



was still alive and relatively healthy because you can almost tell this is where Church's design began."

Landscape architect Josh Koons and architect Jim Wilson also assisted Simpson in the restoration. The project restored the original planting bed layout and plant choices (originally done with the help of Atlanta landscape architect Edward Daugherty). The pecan tree remains the center of the design. The only default necessary to Church's design was the replacement of grass with artificial turf, as the mature canopy of the main pecan tree made growing grass unfeasible.

Simpson relishes the UGA campus landscape. Other favorite locales include North Campus, the Founders Memorial Garden, D.W. Brooks Mall, and various nooks and crannies of transitional spaces. His advice to students of the CED exhorts that future designers be patient as well as creative: "Know your strengths and weaknesses; be kind, respectful, and gracious. These are traits that serve the communities we attend. It's all connected."+

# CIRCLE GALLERY

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PIONEER OF AMERICAN LANDSCAPE EDUCATION**

August 28-October 1, 2014

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THREE HISTORIC CEMETERIES IN ATHENS, GA**

October 9-November 7, 2014

**WITNESS – PHOTOGRAPHY OF BILLY HOWARD**

January 12-February 12, 2015

**925,000 CAMPSITES – THE COMMODIFICATION OF AN  
AMERICAN EXPERIENCE BY MARTIN HOGUE**

February 19-March 27, 2015

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS RESERVE:  
A GARDEN ROOTED IN THE PLACE OF ITS MAKING**

April 2-April 30, 2015

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Vice Provost for International Programs and  
Professor, University of Massachusetts  
October 7, 2014

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October 22, 2014

## **DR. FRITJOF CAPRA**

Director, Center for Ecoliteracy, Berkeley, CA  
November 13, 2014

## **PEGGY CARR AND PAUL ZWICK**

Co-authors of *Smart Land-Use Analysis: the LUCIS Model*  
College of Design, Construction, and Planning, University  
of Florida  
February 12, 2015

Artwork by  
Thomas Baker, MLA 2015



# THESES & PRACTICUMS

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# CONNECTIVITY

One of the great myths of American history is that the nation was built by a small number of heroic pioneers—rugged individuals who against all odds transformed forests and prairies into towns, fields, and railroads. In truth, communities of people built those farms, population centers, and transportation networks. The burgeoning communities provided the necessary social and environmental connections that spurred the development of an entirely new landscape. While our goals have changed—today we are as interested in preservation, conservation, and sustainability, as we are in traditional development—connecting people to people and people to the landscape is still the vital precursor to making beneficial landscape change. This is why I am so pleased that the outstanding students, who conceived, wrote, and edited the 2015 edition of *Georgia Landscape Magazine* selected *connectivity* as their central theme. Each article herein presents a unique justification and explanation for seeking the important connections in all that we do as designers, planners, and preservationists.

Here at the University of Georgia, the College of Environment + Design is seen as the most effective college in creating connections between disciplines, departments, and colleges. The recent Geodesign workshop with Carl Steinitz in which faculty and students provided planning recommendations for Wormsloe and all of Chatham County, Georgia, is an outstanding example because experts from across the UGA Campus and from distant parts of the state participated. The CED is also establishing a reputation of successfully partnering on projects with several campus units including the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, the College of Public Health, the Franklin College of Arts and Humanities, the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, and the Odum School of Ecology. In every case, the goal is to apply design thinking to complex and perplexing social and environmental problems.

The desire to serve as an interdisciplinary partner is also driving our capital campaign focused on raising money for a building addition, upgraded technology, and faculty and student support. Once those funds are raised the College will optimize its potential as the principal connector on campus with the ability to facilitate projects undertaken by numerous disciplines and to provide the synthesis needed to offer the very best environmental solutions. We are extremely grateful to the many of you who have already helped us make progress toward our financial goals through your generous contributions, and ask everyone who reads this amazing issue of *Georgia Landscape Magazine* to consider giving to the College of Environment + Design.

## DAN NADENICEK

DEAN AND DRAPER CHAIR IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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