



design matters

A VISUAL GUIDE INTO THE LIFE OF **EDSA**

ENRICHMENT THINKING
STRATEGY MEETS SOLUTION

FROM A TO ZOO
ANIMAL INTELLIGENT DESIGN

BOOMING BOOMERS
80 IS THE NEW 60

LIVING WITH WATER
COASTAL RESILIENCE



**AS WE DESIGN PLACES FOR
MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES,
OUR ACTIONS — EVERY DAY,
IN BIG AND SMALL WAYS —
MUST POSITIVELY IMPACT
QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL.**



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IN MEMORY OF JOE LALLI AND JOHN MILLER WHO HELPED SHAPE THE EDSA LEGACY.

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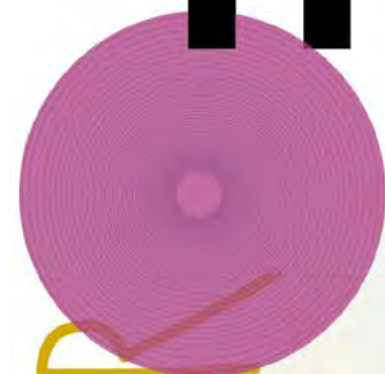
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EMBRACING CHANGE

At EDSA, we are continuously evolving as we expand towards the future. Our pursuit of excellence is a journey that Ed Stone started and one that Joe Lalli continued. And while this journey involves change, it also creates opportunities and ignites growth. At the same time, we must realize that these positive results all stem from a willingness to question assumptions, upset the status quo, learn from other industries, set goals, delegate, motivate, inspire, and hold ourselves accountable. It is here, where we are focused.

Whether opening a new office, refining a growth strategy, rolling out the latest technologies, or establishing new policies and design processes, embracing change and adapting to the unknown are involved. The simple truth for all of us at EDSA – and all of those we serve – is that without change, there is no advancement.

My vision, like Ed and Joe before me, is for EDSA to be a company with a great brand and a supportive culture that produces outstanding design. With those goals in mind, we continue to challenge everyone on our team to become leaders in the profession and to look at how doing things differently will make their jobs better and resulting design solutions more robust.

Along the way, there will be mistakes – and that’s ok. In fact, it’s not only ok, it’s necessary, because we learn the most from these experiences. The best learning is done from overcoming obstacles and finding alternatives when there appears to be none. As the saying goes, ‘smooth seas do not make skillful sailors’. When we embrace the process of learning, change becomes evolutionary – we not only survive, we thrive.

At EDSA, our evolution is about designing without limits, embracing our greater purpose, being happy, leveraging our collective brilliance, listening with curiosity, and above all, contributing to the amazing legacy of EDSA. So, challenge yourself to be a ‘skillful sailor’ – be willing to take on any challenge. Push the envelope, embrace change, make mistakes, and be inspired every day by the new opportunities that await.

All the best,

Douglas C. Smith, PLA, ASLA
President

SMALL CHANGES

BIG IMPACT

NESTLED BETWEEN THE CAIN AT THE COVE, AN ADULTS-ONLY
ULTRA-POOL WITHIN THE ATLANTIS RESORT IN PARADISE
ISLAND, BAHAMAS, AND GORGEOUS CARIBBEAN BEACHES,
20 PRIVATE, TEAK-WOOD LOUVERED VILLA CABANAS SET
AN ALL-NEW STANDARD IN THE LUXURY HOSPITALITY REALM.
RATHER THAN TRADITIONAL EXTERIOR CABANAS, THESE
MINI-ROOMS ARE EXTREMELY POPULAR. ANCHORED BY TWIN
PATIOS OFFERING BOTH BEACH AND POOL ACCESS, FLAT-
SCREEN TVS, BOSE STEREO SOUND SYSTEMS, INTERNET, FULL
BATHROOMS WITH SHOWERS, AND A DEDICATED BUTLER ON
CALL, THEY RENT FOR \$200 A DAY.



CAIN AT THE COVE, ATLANTIS – PARADISE ISLAND, BAHAMAS

IT IS NOT NECESSARILY ABOUT
CREATING MORE, BUT INSTEAD
TWEAKING WHAT YOU HAVE
BASED ON WHAT’S REALLY
IMPORTANT TO THE LOCATION,
THE COMMUNITY, AND THE
CLIENT. WHEN YOU LOOK AT ANY
SITUATION AND REALLY THINK
ABOUT WHAT IS WORKING AND
WHAT ISN’T – THE NEED FOR
CHANGE BECOMES VERY CLEAR.

BOB BEHLING, EDSA PRINCIPAL

EDSA’S BIG, LITTLE CHANGES



Technology Integration



Community Connectivity



Pedestrian Circulation



Social & Environmental Stewardship



Modern Design Elements

Small changes, like adding cabanas, can have a big impact on sustained growth, whether it is a resort, a residential neighborhood, or even a municipality. “With the cabanas, guests have an exclusive place to relax during the day,” says Bob Behling, EDSA Principal. “They provide refuge from the sun and create a series of experiences that take people outside of their hotel rooms. And the cabanas are without a doubt a revenue generator, an up-tick from resort lodging – improving guest relations and producing additional income 365 days a year.”

Designers at EDSA continuously seek to reset, relook, and refresh projects not only to improve the user experience but also increase value to the bottom line. “Things change,” explains Marc Hall, Associate Principal at EDSA. “The residential and resort landscape is recurrently transforming. New trends are always evolving and different ways of doing things make headlines. But the basics of design don’t really change – items like scale and proportion, people and pedestrian places. Rather, it is the means, methods, and materials that define why people like to be in certain places... and that is always progressing.”

In residential development planning, the biggest shift, especially with national homebuilders, is the recognition of more pedestrian-oriented communities with well-defined open spaces. “Conventional wisdom was that most new luxury home communities required golf courses so developers could earn additional revenue by charging premium prices for those parcels,” Hall continues. “Now, builders recognize that harnessing the natural assets of the land – creating a series of interconnected green spaces and trail networks throughout the neighborhood, for example, will also yield similar added dividends – often with less up front construction and on-going maintenance costs than golf courses require.”

IT IS THE MEANS, METHODS,
AND MATERIALS THAT DEFINE
WHY PEOPLE LIKE TO BE IN
CERTAIN PLACES...
AND THAT IS ALWAYS
PROGRESSING.

MARC HALL, EDSA ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

Such modifications even extend to cities, particularly those seeking to attract additional visitors, residents and businesses. “Metropolitan areas can make small changes to their public realm streetscapes in providing quality materials, ample walkway widths, welcoming signage, and dramatic lighting to draw more people downtown, says Keith Weaver, EDSA Associate Principal. “We are working with cities to examine where and how they can put their streets on ‘road diets’ and return space to the pedestrian, cyclist or transit rider. There is too much right of way devoted to vehicles,” he says. With fewer people driving downtown, relying on mass transit and using other modes of transportation including bicycles – today’s

roadway segments devoted to automobiles are oversized. Narrowing travel and parking lanes to 11 and 7 feet respectively and restoring that real estate back to the sidewalk system for, say, outdoor cafes, or a dedicated bikeway, is relatively simple and economical. According to Weaver, “It has been proven to entice more people of all ages to the urban core, thus adding value for businesses and a higher quality of life experience for the surrounding neighborhoods.”

Whatever the venue, the experts at EDSA are continually searching for new ideas and better design alternatives. Behling adds, “In the hospitality sector, guest preferences change often. At high-end resorts, we are constantly seeking to determine what amenities will appeal to guests today and a year or two down the road.” Miniature golf courses, hotel branded residences, peer-to-peer dining, active pursuits such as cycling, the newly coined ‘poshtels,’ and water experiences are becoming necessary.

With guest demographics shifting, many luxury resorts now want to cater to families and are adjusting their offerings and activities accordingly. “For example, we know that poolside guests, especially those with small children, want to be on the water’s edge,” says Behling. “There is only so much area around a rectangular pool. So we are changing the shape of pools so they bend and meander like a river. By doing that, you elongate the perimeter where more people can sit directly on the water, making guests happier.”

Also related to amenity design, a desire for more private space in public environments is causing an incremental shift in design thinking. The standard has been to allocate about 10 square feet of pool space for each guest. “We now allow 25-30 square feet of pool area for each room planned. In the past, we would design the area for two chaise lounges to a hotel room, now its 3-4 chaise lounges.



CROWNE PLAZA AND HUAYU SHOPPING VILLAGE - SANYA, CHINA

NARROWING TRAVEL AND PARKING LANES TO 11 AND 7 FEET RESPECTIVELY AND RESTORING THAT REAL ESTATE BACK TO THE SIDEWALK SYSTEM FOR, SAY, OUTDOOR CAFES, OR A DEDICATED BIKEWAY IS RELATIVELY SIMPLE AND ECONOMICAL.

KEITH WEAVER,
EDSA ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

“It’s not necessarily about creating more, but instead tweaking what you have based on what’s really important to the location, the community, and the client. When you look at any situation and really think about what is working and what isn’t – the need for change becomes very clear,” suggests Behling.

A few years ago, families wanted to live privately – down a winding road or in the back of a development by a lake with a long view,” says Hall. “Privacy was important and home buyers were willing to pay a premium for it. Today, a larger portion of the buyer profile prefers to be an active part of the community. It’s not about how big your yard is or how many square feet your home but more about a sense of community. It’s about the diversity of experience and creating as many choices as possible.”

Realizing this, EDSA designers are creating neighborhoods with more interactive community spaces. “We’re weaving open spaces throughout residential offerings where the green area serves

These modifications increase occupancy, and create guest satisfaction and brand loyalty,” explains Behling.

Knowing what is important to the consumer must guide and prioritize the majority of all renovations and upgrades to a property. When planning Altos de Monaco, a new five-star residential resort on the northern coast of Colombia, the owners requested a large fútbol (soccer) field for recreation and socialization. “Through research, we discovered that on the weekends, many people in Colombia travel to ‘fincas’, farms in the country,” says Behling. “As a result, we repurposed the land – designing a community vegetable garden with ample space for farm-to-table produce. Because people have a desire to work the land – growing and picking their own vegetables, the finca will be a draw for the residential component and a holistic relationship with the on-site restaurant will produce a new revenue stream.”

EDSA’S [BIG] IMPACTS

Big changes can result from incremental design gestures that improve the form, function and balance of a space with positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes. *Examples include:*

Enhanced aquatic experiences with poolside cabanas
– Cain at the Cove Atlantis – Paradise Island, Bahamas

Well defined interconnected green spaces and trail networks
– FishHawk Ranch – Tampa, Florida

Restored sidewalk system with pedestrian-orientation as a priority
– Columbus Riverfront – Columbus, Georgia

Elongation of pool perimeters, seating configurations and greater space allocation
– Crowne Plaza – Sanya, China

New amenities offerings like farm to table dining
– Altos de Monaco Resort and Beach Club – Cartagena, Colombia

Community gateways for sense of arrival
– Deep Harbour – Cambridge, Maryland

Positive visual impressions with façade and wayfinding detailing
– York Corridor – Baltimore, Maryland



COLUMBUS RIVERFRONT – COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

as an arrival platform that everybody uses – helping neighbors connect and interact with one another. So instead of a developer asking an additional \$20,000 for a golf course view, each lot fronts additional green space and the developer can charge a 10-15 percent premium for all lots in the community.” EDSA is also mixing small lots with larger ones and introducing out-of-sight alleys for parking instead of utilizing the street for a greater aesthetic appeal.

Changing a neighborhood’s design to a variety of tighter, more compressed residential blocks is another small modification that can produce full-size results. Hall says, “Shorter blocks with tighter networks of streets are now preferred. It’s all about walkability. People don’t walk 1,200 feet all at once, so we try to keep blocks 400-600 feet long to make it more pedestrian friendly.” At Newland Communities’ 795-acre FishHawk Ranch in Tampa, Florida, EDSA designed a system of green paths that connect the neighborhood to the educational facilities, enabling residents to walk to school within five minutes.”

Greater connectivity and more open space are also important in urban areas, which are starting to incorporate modifications that largely impact quality of life. Cities are looking at public realm solutions that address maintenance, durability, and the incorporation of higher-quality materials – allocating dollars that focus on improving the visitor and resident experience. “For example, pedestrian sanctuaries, great gateways, and unified wayfinding systems are helping spark redevelopment and boost property values,” explains Weaver.

Consider that society is at its most dense in rich urban environments – so why not capitalize on how people and technology can inspire each other on a daily basis? “Adapting new technology into public open spaces with outdoor Wi-Fi parks, solar charging stations, electronic wayfinding, and digital message boards is a relatively inexpensive way for cities to make life more functional,” says Weaver.

Cities, like resort destinations, are gradually evolving into more personalized spaces, allowing citizens to organize their lives in the most sustainable way. And, despite the fears that the digital age would drive us all into lives of wireless isolation, the opposite seems to be happening – parks are once again becoming a place to share, read, write, gossip, and debate – in short, to connect and communicate. Trees that shaded city-dwellers out for a stroll decades ago now keep the glare off touch screens and a new philosophy to drive-and-park once, or even not drive at all, are adding to urban green initiatives.

Creating a strong arrival sequence is another readily available and affordable means by which to make cities more inviting. “A gateway is the first visual impression a visitor sees,” says Weaver. “Gateways are a welcoming statement for entire communities – iconic symbols of the fabric of a region or place that serves to unify an entire downtown district through wayfinding, public art and other central design themes.”

Since the look and feel of a city continues to be important, some metropolises are changing from traditional zoning to form-based codes. Weaver explains, “Form-based zoning creates a more predictable public and private realm by controlling the physical form first and land uses second – addressing the connection between buildings, streets, open space, and people with an emphasis on function and design.” Miami, Florida was one of the pioneering communities to initially establish form based codes in Florida. Additionally, EDSA has assisted in establishing form-based coding for urban overlay districts in Old South Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Waldorf, Maryland, and Belair, Maryland. This relatively small regulatory investment is reaping more predictable rewards in these areas as new development.

One of the most widely used approaches to improving a downtown’s curb appeal is incentivized facade improvement. Thanks to partnerships between downtown organizations, property owners, the arts community, and grant funding, unattractive empty storefronts are coming back to life and occupied spaces are sprucing up. These programs seek to enhance the visual appeal of the downtown area and to provide a financial incentive for businesses to invest in the redevelopment of their property.

**WE’RE WEAVING OPEN SPACES
THROUGHOUT RESIDENTIAL
OFFERINGS WHERE THE GREEN
AREA SERVES AS AN ARRIVAL
PLATFORM THAT EVERYBODY
USES – HELPING NEIGHBORS
CONNECT AND INTERACT WITH
ONE ANOTHER.**

MARC HALL, EDSA ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL



DEEP HARBOUR - CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND



FISHHAWK RANCH – TAMPA, FLORIDA

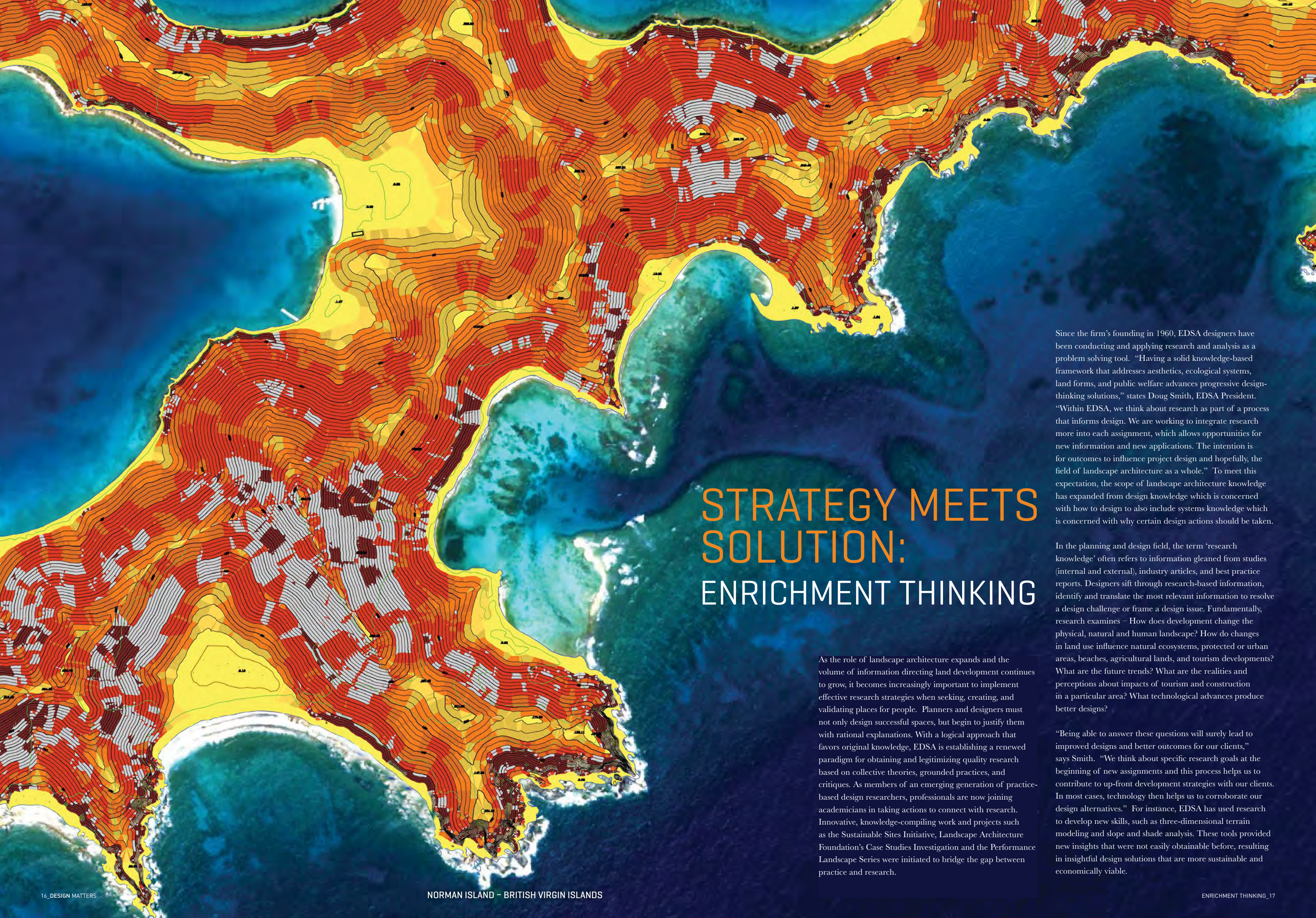
EDSA is working with the York Corridor Collective in Baltimore, Maryland to identify strategic candidate buildings and businesses for the organization’s façade and signage matching grant program. “By providing relatively small amounts of matching funding and design assistance to building and business owners in a district, positive visual change and vibrancy can be realized in an incremental yet substantial way,” explains Weaver.

While major streetscape improvements may require too large of an investment of tax dollars, an effective way to enhance curb appeal for a quick fix to an awkward intersection, or an empty lot, is simply addressing clutter and cleanliness. “Excessive signage, temporary signage and advertising racks for example are often overlooked contributors to the appearance of a downtown area. Taking steps to develop practical and legal ordinances and routine code enforcement to cut the clutter can help assure that downtowns remain attractive and consistent with the overall downtown brand,” suggests Weaver. Additionally often, despite the best efforts of downtown leaders, trash and litter continue to plague many central business districts. “Ideally, the municipal government has ample funds, equipment and staff to keep everything clean and in good repair. But when that is not the case building owners and merchant associations have initiated Business Improvement Districts and community wide clean-up events that can work to change negative behaviors. The best alternative is to invest more up front on the features, design and maintenance programs to avoid problems later.”

Hall adds, “Regardless of location, flexibility and adaptability must always serve as the foundation for change. We must also keep in mind the topology, materials, means of construction and an awareness of conservation efforts in moving our mission as stewards of the land forward for the betterment of all.”

EDSA’s talented staff of professionals never stops searching for ways to improve the projects they design, whether it’s making a development more sustainable, providing resort guests what they desire, determining ways to add additional revenue, or working with cities to make streetscapes more appealing.

Even small changes, have a big impact.



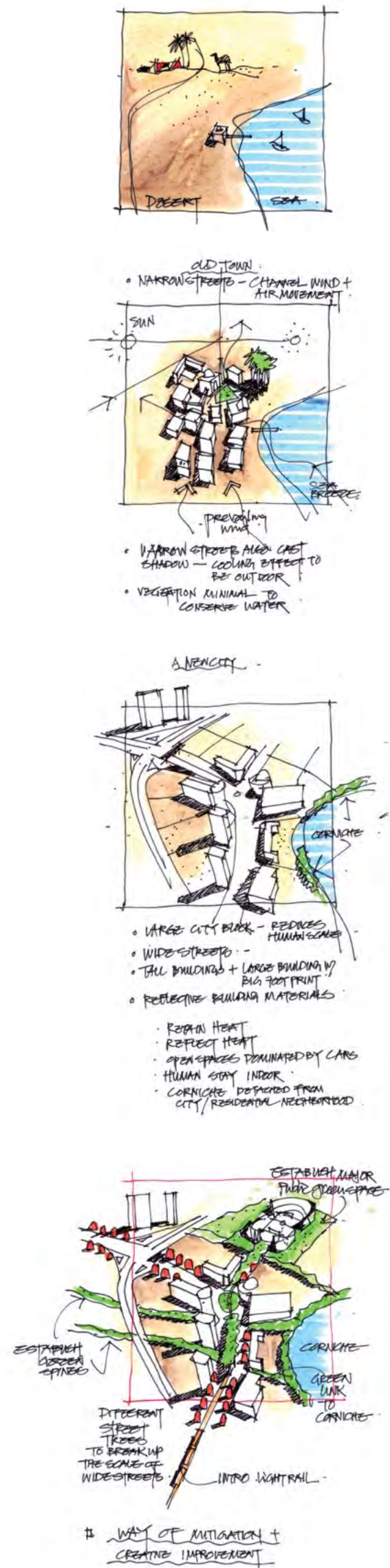
STRATEGY MEETS SOLUTION: ENRICHMENT THINKING

As the role of landscape architecture expands and the volume of information directing land development continues to grow, it becomes increasingly important to implement effective research strategies when seeking, creating, and validating places for people. Planners and designers must not only design successful spaces, but begin to justify them with rational explanations. With a logical approach that favors original knowledge, EDSA is establishing a renewed paradigm for obtaining and legitimizing quality research based on collective theories, grounded practices, and critiques. As members of an emerging generation of practice-based design researchers, professionals are now joining academicians in taking actions to connect with research. Innovative, knowledge-compiling work and projects such as the Sustainable Sites Initiative, Landscape Architecture Foundation's Case Studies Investigation and the Performance Landscape Series were initiated to bridge the gap between practice and research.

Since the firm's founding in 1960, EDSA designers have been conducting and applying research and analysis as a problem solving tool. "Having a solid knowledge-based framework that addresses aesthetics, ecological systems, land forms, and public welfare advances progressive design-thinking solutions," states Doug Smith, EDSA President. "Within EDSA, we think about research as part of a process that informs design. We are working to integrate research more into each assignment, which allows opportunities for new information and new applications. The intention is for outcomes to influence project design and hopefully, the field of landscape architecture as a whole." To meet this expectation, the scope of landscape architecture knowledge has expanded from design knowledge which is concerned with how to design to also include systems knowledge which is concerned with why certain design actions should be taken.

In the planning and design field, the term 'research knowledge' often refers to information gleaned from studies (internal and external), industry articles, and best practice reports. Designers sift through research-based information, identify and translate the most relevant information to resolve a design challenge or frame a design issue. Fundamentally, research examines – How does development change the physical, natural and human landscape? How do changes in land use influence natural ecosystems, protected or urban areas, beaches, agricultural lands, and tourism developments? What are the future trends? What are the realities and perceptions about impacts of tourism and construction in a particular area? What technological advances produce better designs?

"Being able to answer these questions will surely lead to improved designs and better outcomes for our clients," says Smith. "We think about specific research goals at the beginning of new assignments and this process helps us to contribute to up-front development strategies with our clients. In most cases, technology then helps us to corroborate our design alternatives." For instance, EDSA has used research to develop new skills, such as three-dimensional terrain modeling and slope and shade analysis. These tools provided new insights that were not easily obtainable before, resulting in insightful design solutions that are more sustainable and economically viable.



Site Analysis



Zoning Strategy



Concept Plan



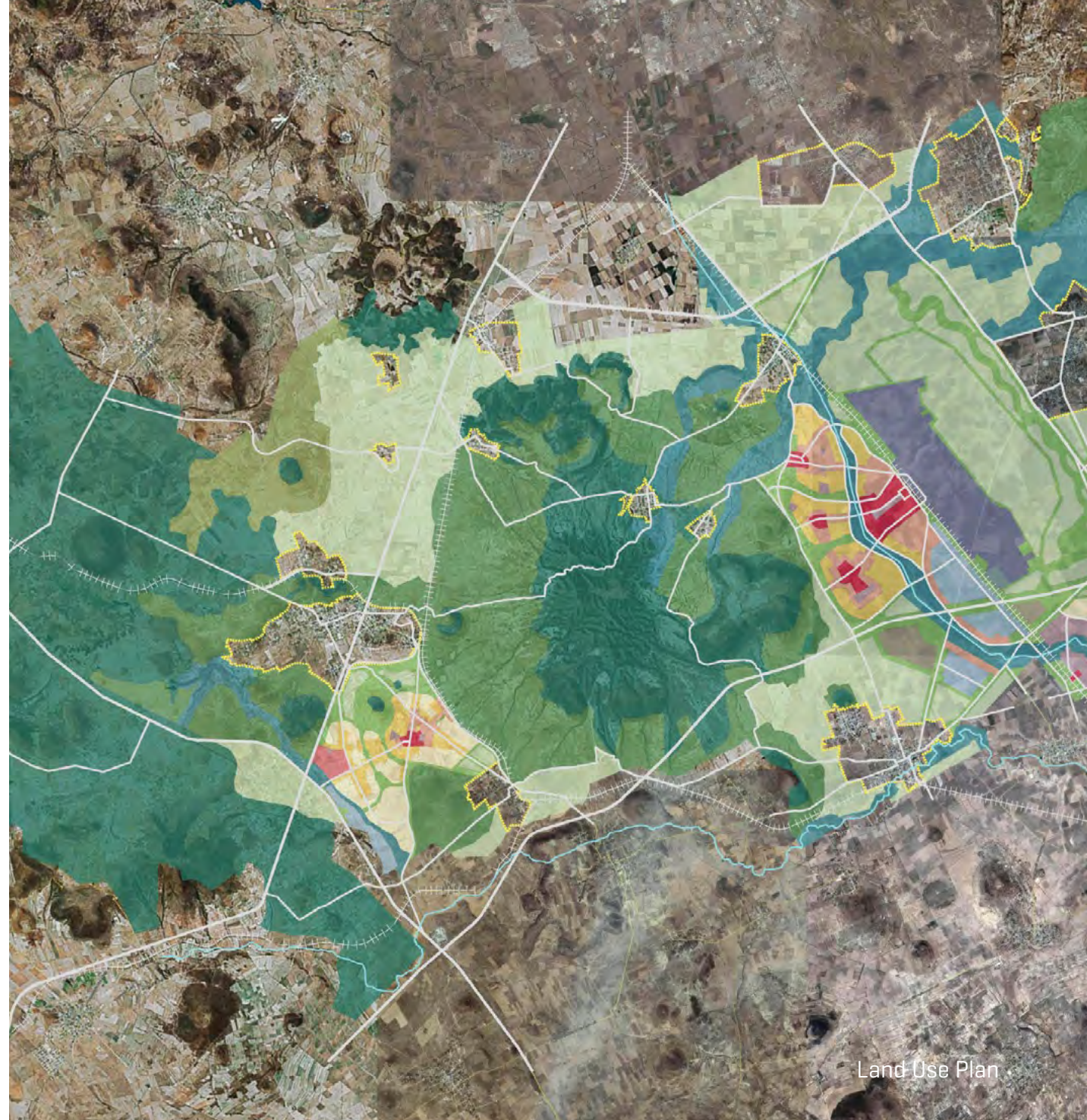
Bicycle + Pedestrian Nodes

Practice-based, environmental design research is a systematic inquiry that both creates knowledge and solves specific design challenges. “When we conduct and report on research, our intent is to facilitate a general level of knowledge that applies to a variety of current and future situations,” explains Rich Centolella, EDSA Principal. Within the EDSA planning and design environment, research usually features one or more focus areas, generally developed through dialogue with clients or internal design teams. “It is crucial for EDSA, our clients, and the end users we serve, that research be realistic within real-world constraints of time, money, expertise, access, and ethics.”

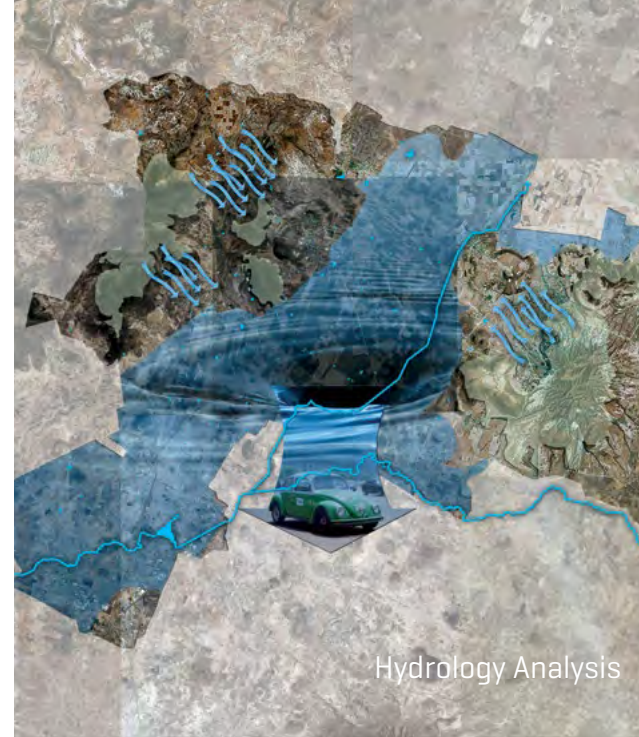
“A substantial amount of our research occurs at the beginning of the design process. Very early on, it consists of methodically gathering and reviewing information about a project to gain critical insights into strategic intentions, market conditions and emerging trends, existing historic and social practices, and critical site analysis and case studies of comparable projects. Sharing this research knowledge with design teams helps to develop a more informed image of the emerging situation and context from both a geographic and social perspective, with details that include client expectations or potential end user needs relative to current and future conditions,” explains Centolella. In many cases, EDSA uses this research to compile baseline data for the next phase of planning and design studies.

For example, when embarking on a large-scale master plan assignment for Eastern Lucaya on Grand Bahama Island, EDSA applied advanced research and technology strategies to transform the planning and design process. The client’s vision for the 20,000 acre site with several miles of beachfront included development of a deep-water marina, various hotels and hospitality amenities, as well as commercial and residential units. Working with research scientists and GIS specialists, EDSA developed and conducted a spatial and environmental analysis that became a game changer. Traditionally this type of analysis is rarely done, and environmental considerations – usually in form of an Environmental Impact Assessment – are typically addressed only after the master plan is developed. The resulting, fully integrated maps illustrated highly accurate temporal and spatial relationships of natural resources, environmental conditions and human activities, even in remote and inaccessible areas. The application of GIS technology was especially useful in visualizing a myriad of site and design parameters, greatly facilitating the ability of the entire team – client, planners, designers and researchers – to evaluate opportunities and constraints thereby creating feasible design solutions that exceeded the expectations of project proponents and stakeholders.

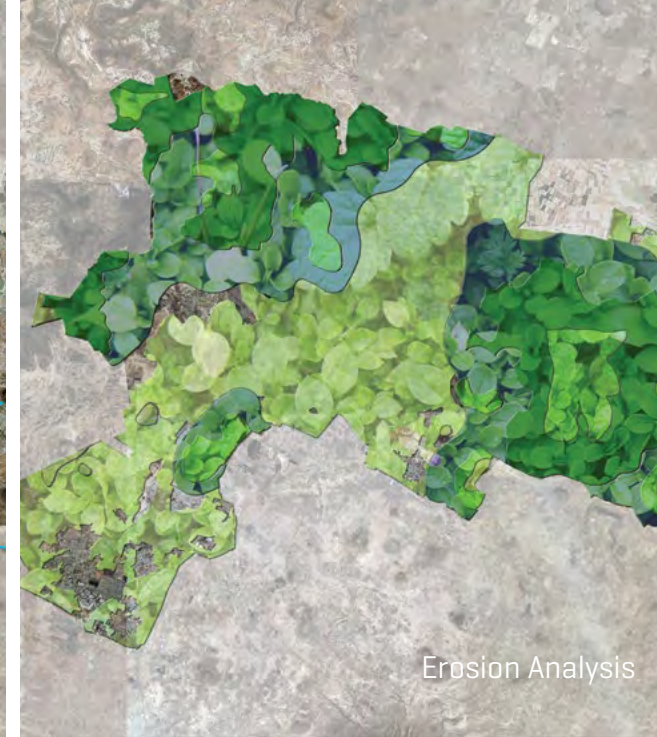
Increasing complexities of land-use planning present a challenge to all professionals to employ even more sophisticated methods, develop more innovative and creative solutions, and provide well-founded rationales and justifications. Clients and the general public demand that the underlying natural and socio-economic systems, and the cultural and psychological aspects of the human condition are understood, appreciated and ultimately expressed in the design. “At EDSA, we see design itself as artful problem-solving in a real-world context where the spatial relationship between open spaces and built forms effectively respond to program, budget, and people,” says Centolella. “Documenting the physical, social and cultural aspects of a site builds an intuitive research basis that allows for all of us to become better at our craft. This intellectual continuity brings value to our work even in the face of considerable time constraints implicit to research in practice,” adds Smith.



Land Use Plan



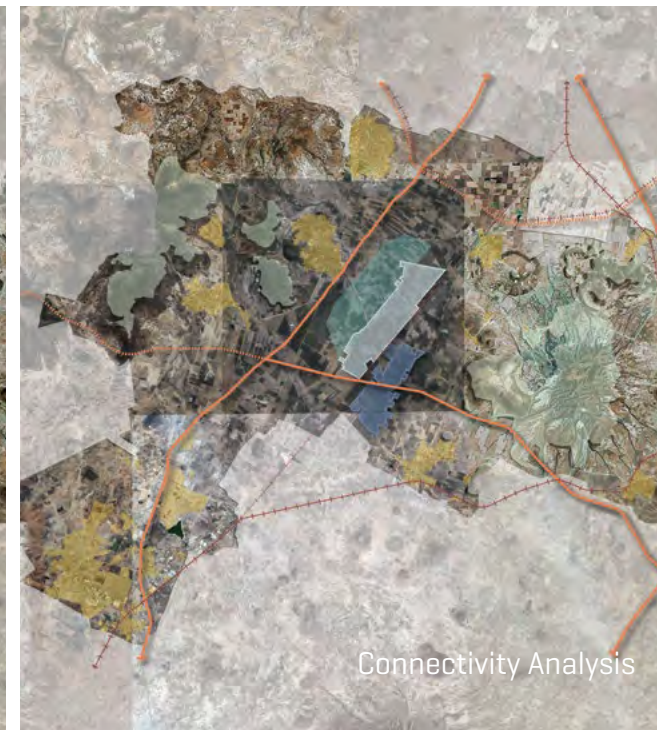
Hydrology Analysis



Erosion Analysis



Inventory Analysis



Connectivity Analysis



For François Verhoeven, an Associate at EDSA, an elegant design solution requires a comprehensive understanding of the problem, and this requires design research. Research not only provides context for intelligent design, it also expedites the design process by allowing the team to make research-supported decisions, and avoid biased arguments. “As absorbent observers and designers who embrace a greater purpose, we conduct audits of project designs, seek out case studies, actively participate in visioning workshops, perform interim assessments of projects, as well as gain first-hand knowledge through site reconnaissance. Teams also facilitate interactive sessions or ‘topic charrettes’ in which a theory or new idea is presented and team members then discuss the design implications,” explains Verhoeven.

Additionally, research provides substantiated evidence of the effectiveness – and alternatively, the weaknesses – of design decisions as they relate to the human experience. Although many of EDSA’s current research initiatives are typically undertaken to produce a specific design decision, a host of additional environmental design and behavioral strategies are often developed. Verhoeven explains, “For a recent hospital assignment, we evaluated how emerging trends in the hospitality industry could be incorporated into healthcare design. Several ideas emerged including providing patients with choices for activities, flexibility in layout and the importance the natural environment plays in a person’s physical and emotional well-being.”

EDSA is responding to this challenge by further emphasizing research and scientific inquiry as an integral part of the planning and design process. “Our mission is to convert research knowledge into designs without restraining the creative process and whilst producing better, measurable design outcomes,” says Smith.

To meet objectives, EDSA is taking a number of steps:

- We are allocating additional resources to collate, coordinate, and manage the flow of available information – making sure new insights are quickly shared and available to everyone in the firm through our intranet platform. We are reviewing the genesis, design concepts, and implementation of past projects to ensure lessons learned are applied to inform and enhance future design outcomes. Together, these efforts help organize our institutional knowledge not only for current and upcoming projects, but for future generations of landscape architects.
- Secondly, and equally important, GIS AutoCAD Map services that go beyond simple mapping exercises will play a greater role in the process and design work. Because of its underlying database technology and capacity to recognize spatially related objects, GIS technology can reveal patterns that otherwise would go unnoticed. It enables visualization, analysis, and the comparison of alternatives – providing designers with additional tools – and clients and other stakeholders with information required to make sensible and informed decisions.
- We are expanding our ability to establish and monitor performance parameters used to evaluate project design. This process requires that the desired results be articulated in the early stages and then tracked past the completion of the project to measure both the design process and its outcomes.
- EDSA is committed to strengthening research and innovation, and we will do so in partnership with universities, industry organizations such as the Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF), scientists and other experts. Our goal is to study specific topics such as coastal development, green technologies, sustainable practices, and others – publishing these findings. We expect these projects to stimulate our creative thinking across disciplines and push our work to new heights.

“As we embark on our 55th year of practice, we cannot help but realize that we inherited something pretty incredible. Ed Stone was very innovative and redefined the role of landscape architects. Subsequently, Joe Lalli charted a new course – taking the practice to an unprecedented global level. Our task now is to meet the challenges of a world that is ever-increasing in complexity by expanding our horizons and using our imagination to create viable and sustainable solutions. If history is any indication, continuous research will help us hone our skills as planners and designers, set new benchmarks with regard to the design process and innovation, and deliver higher quality communities, resorts, and urban environments for all to enjoy,” concludes Smith.

FROM

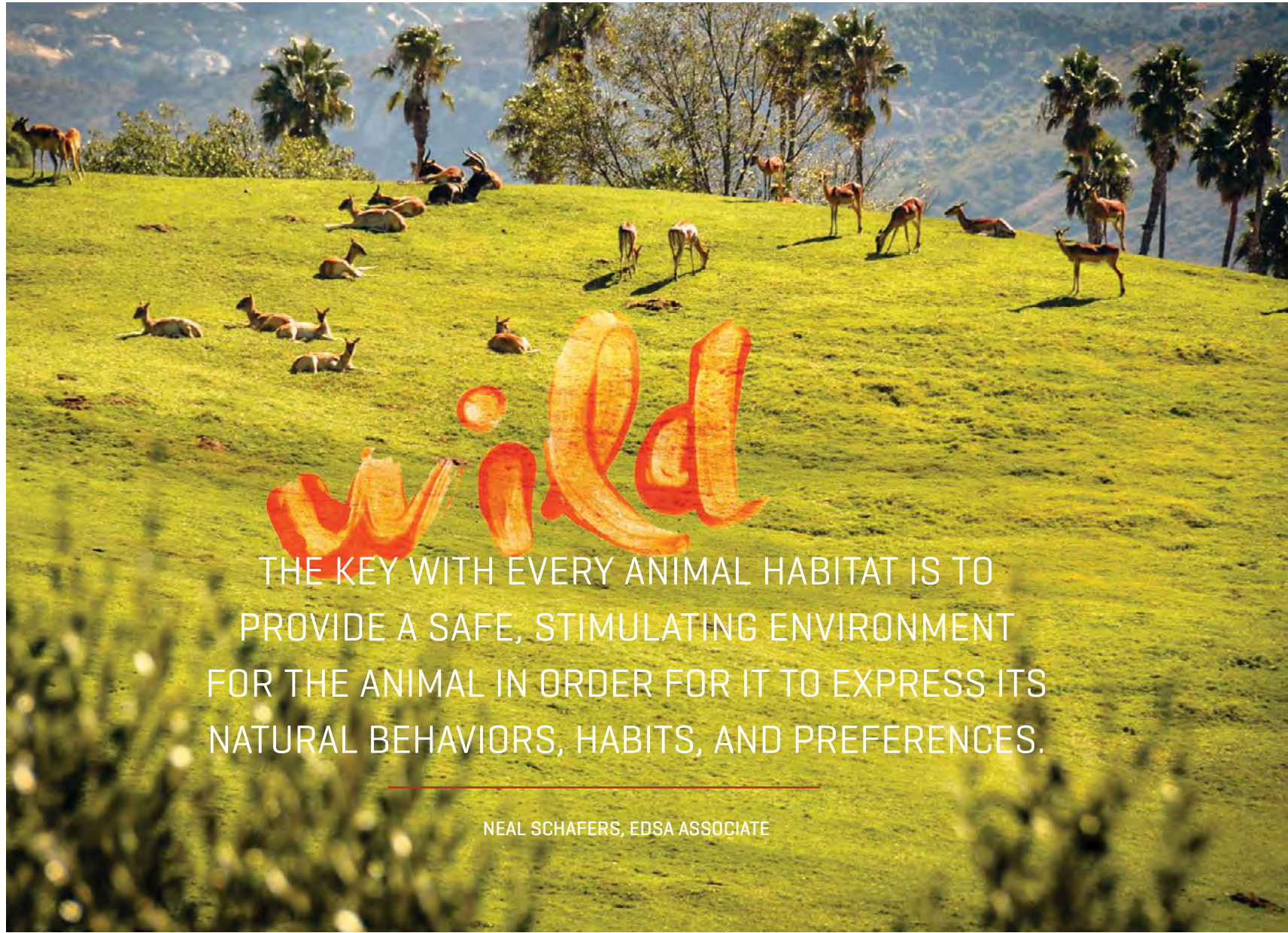
TO

A ZOO

ANIMAL INTELLIGENT DESIGN

If you've visited a zoo in the past decade, you've likely noticed that animal exhibits are being transformed from concrete and metal bar 'enclosures' to engaging environments where long-term animal welfare is paramount. Displays of animals in cages, grouped by family species, is giving way to larger, more natural and more visually interesting habitats reflective of the actual places of origin for featured wildlife. Zoos and animal habitats are becoming increasingly more sophisticated as our knowledge of animal behavior, flora and fauna, and their environments advances – giving way to immersive landscape exhibitions.





THE KEY WITH EVERY ANIMAL HABITAT IS TO
PROVIDE A SAFE, STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT
FOR THE ANIMAL IN ORDER FOR IT TO EXPRESS ITS
NATURAL BEHAVIORS, HABITS, AND PREFERENCES.

NEAL SCHAFERS, EDSA ASSOCIATE

So, while zoos continue to be a topic of debate for animal right activists, today’s facilities are more aware of the role they play in the preservation and prevention of animal extinction. Some species simply would not exist in the wild were it not for man-made habitats. The reason – increased expansion by humans. Because of habitat encroachment and dwindling viable open areas, EDSA has partnered with other consultants to enhance this notion – where animals have greater freedom and control over their environment, and wildlife conservation and education are of the utmost importance.

“Protecting wildlife habitats has never been more critical,” says Gregg Sutton, a 20-year veteran of landscape architecture and a Principal at EDSA. “Large wildlife parks, animal preserves, and sanctuaries have become a necessary and effective conservation alternative for at risk animal populations.” Animal-focused environments must educate, inspire, and ignite the spark of conservation – offering humans a safe insight into the other creatures that share the planet as their home. However, zoological environments must still be fun and entertaining to keep guests wanting to visit and more importantly coming back. “We must understand that a good guest experience revolves around the animal. By looking to the animals first, before creating a story, the final product will by far, become the best experience possible for both guests and the animals living there,” explains Sutton.

Once thought of as being peripheral and remedial, behavioral management and environmental stimulation have become central elements of zoo design, operations, and the visitor experience. The premise is to recreate a natural habitat and beautiful place where people feel good and animal care and well-being is an obvious priority. This immersive bio-centric philosophy suggests that the more closely the landscape resembles that from which a species evolved, the more likely the animals’ needs, some of which we may not even know exist, are met.

Equally important to zoological park design is the introduction of objects, sounds, smells or other stimuli so animals can demonstrate species-typical behaviors, be it physical, social, or emotional. “When animal behavior informs design, a more authentic and entertaining experience is created,” says Sutton. This new paradigm for naturalistic enrichment represents the perfect intersection between what works for the animals – creatively and functionally, what is best for the visitor – fun, exciting, and interpretive entertainment, what is good for the business – both short and long term, and what is best for the staff – safe and rewarding work.

Neal Schafers, an associate with EDSA, adds, “The key with every animal habitat is to provide a safe, stimulating environment for the animal in order for it to express its natural behaviors, habits, and preferences. This leads to more meaningful educational opportunities which in turn fosters an understanding and acknowledgment of the need for a long-term balance between humans, animals, plants, and the environment.”

EDSA’s expertise in animal habitat and wildlife projects intensified nearly 8,000 miles from the company’s Fort Lauderdale, Florida, headquarters – in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. Nine years ago, EDSA began master planning the Al Ain Wildlife Park & Resort – leading a multi-disciplinary team that encouraged continuous respect for the region’s complex desert ecosystem and the symbiotic relationships between people, wildlife, culture, and the environment.





Inspired by 40 years of conservation and environmental stewardship, the Al Ain Wildlife Park & Resort includes a mix of resort, residential, commercial, retail, educational, and entertainment elements all surrounded by the natural beauty of the area and the created ‘Deserts of the World,’ safaris. The Sheikh Zayed Desert Learning Center pays tribute to the legacy of the late President of the Emirates, whose vision was to create natural habitats for animals to live freely. The iconic building, targeted to receive the highest LEED and Estidama rating, will be a center for continuing education through historic exhibits, displays, and seminars that promote sustainability, habitat conservation, and animal preservation.

“Through the use of diverse animal species and plant collections, the Al Ain Wildlife Park & Resort moves exhibit design to the forefront of conservation efforts,” says Sutton.

“It is one of the most ambitious wildlife projects in the world because of its size, complexity, and number of animals we are dealing with.” Situated around the Sheikh Zayed Desert Learning Center, exhibits of the Arabian Oryx, Arabian Tahr, Nubian Ibex and a tribute to Falconry which may be out of the ordinary, however, very important to the culture of the UAE region and desert environment are showcased.

Creating the natural look and feel of a specific habitat and microsystem is a complex undertaking, requiring the expertise of numerous experienced consultants. For its work at Al Ain, EDSA relied on the experts from around the globe including Dr. Frederic Launay, Abu Dhabi; David Rice, San Diego Zoo and Wildlife Park; Jon Coe, Australia; Mark Craig, Al Ain Zoo; Seattle’s Jones & Jones Architecture; Philadelphia-based CLR Design; and Bernard Harrison and Friends of Singapore/Bali. “We assembled a great team,” affirms Sutton. “At one time, there were 19 consultants from various disciplines including animal behaviorists, curators, and zoo educators. We all worked together to push the limits of animal behavior, exhibitry, and the visitor experience. We even went on safari to Africa to experience and understand the animal world first hand.”

Similarly, EDSA designed wildlife developments include Zoo Miami; Ko’Olina Aquarium in Hawaii, the Virginia Aquarium and Owls Creek; uShaka Marine World; and Wolong Panda Reserve in Sichuan Province, China. “We’ve also been serving as an advisor to the Shenzhen Wildlife Safari and assisted with the design of the Giant Panda and Red Panda exhibits,” says Schafers.

Additionally, EDSA is working on a series of conservation breeding and habitat projects throughout the UAE. In collaboration with Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD), The Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI), Fossil Rim Wildlife Center and The Wilds Wildlife Park, EDSA is helping plan and design two oryx breeding and preservation habitats in Abu Dhabi, as well as preserving and restoring flamingo, mangrove, and oyster habitats.

All of these projects will feature visitor centers and educational programs. The constant component in all of EDSA’s designs involving animals is sustainability. “As planners, we want to make everything innovative and economically sustainable,” explains Sutton. China’s 1,300 acre Hainan Wildlife Park & Resort, for instance, utilizes the existing natural landscape and cultural resources to support and supplement the wildlife park and botanical gardens with world-class memorable experiences. Simultaneously, it promotes a green lifestyle that responsibly addresses ecology and environment, emphasizes harmony, and shares prosperity among people, architecture, and environment.

Animals are extremely intelligent and they not only know the difference between a real habitat and an artificial one, but they also require consistent and high levels of stimuli and interaction to keep them engaged and happy. Since most play and food gathering opportunities in the wild are spontaneous and varied, similar behaviors must be encouraged in all animal facilities. Understanding the ‘mind’ of the animals is crucial along with how they find shelter, search for food, and avoid predators. “When they are living without other animals or family members to interact with and are freed from the necessities of living in the wild, daily life can become





boring and monotonous,” Schafer explains. “By addressing each animal’s unique characteristics including intelligence and personality traits, challenging and entertaining environments will successfully be created.”

“Socialization, privacy versus exhibition, natural stimulus, and need for space must all be present in the design decisions,” continues Schafer. “As we learn more about animal behaviors we can create the appropriate sense of place.” For example, a tiger exhibit calls for a very specialized type of design. They are adept swimmers and enjoy playing in the water as cubs. Thus a moat around their exhibit would add to their habitat and experience. On the other hand, hippopotamuses are temperamental. They are fiercely protective of their young and move extremely fast in water and on land. So designing a habitat that allows zoo keepers to securely feed and treat the animals is key. Likewise, you’ll know how a zebra feels by the position of their ears. When it feels friendly, its ears stand erect; when frightened, its ears are pushed forward. Zebras are also highly territorial, which is why most experts feel that they should not be included in mixed exhibits with other animals. Additionally, the selection of plant materials and animal pairings must be considered. “For example, at Al Ain, special attention was paid to which species were selected for certain areas because some native plants are harmful and must be avoided; and in turn some plant species could be severely damaged by the animals.” EDSA designers also had to be careful on the placement of irrigation systems. “On an extremely hot day, animals quickly become experts at finding subsurface water,” Schafer says, “and they could dig up and destroy irrigation lines.”

EVERY ANIMAL HAS A STORY. IT’S OUR JOB TO TELL IT.

GREGG SUTTON, EDSA PRINCIPAL

While animals and staff are given the highest considerations, EDSA designers seek to enhance viewing points and create a sense of wonderment and destination for guests. This entails finding the right balance between exhibition and privacy – creating a habitat for the animals to be seen but also ‘hidden’ spaces for them to retreat. “This directly correlates with creating human places and destinations,” Schafer adds. “When EDSA designs a resort, we look at creating both public and private places and experiences. The public spaces include the large resort pool, areas for athletic activities, places for shopping and so forth. But we also establish more intimate spaces for guests, where a person can escape to read, relax, and meditate.”

Creating alternatives for how visitors get close to animals without disturbing their natural behaviors enhances the overall guest experience. “For example, the incorporation of zip-lines over areas does not distract the animals and provide bird’s eye views – mirrored windows – that let us see the animals up close without them knowing they’re being watched. Night safaris are another innovative approach to witnessing animals during their nocturnal activities while not disturbing them during their midday rest,” suggests Sutton. Additionally, the plants, rocks and other natural features of the exhibits are being extended beyond the edge of animal exhibits into areas where viewers walk, sit, eat, and shop. From the visitors’ point of view, this total immersion approach is serene and naturalistic.



By focusing on behavioral enrichment, animals are by design, given choices in their environment, striking a balance between offering them stimulation and refuge. In Al Ain, the priority was to provide state-of-the-art animal holding facilities combined with large naturalistic habitats, making for well-cared for animals, and unique, comfortable visitor experiences and services. “Every animal has a story. It’s our job to tell it,” says Sutton. “We must interpret how to best maximize species-specific behaviors and minimize stress-induced behaviors.” This only happens when food acquisition, social structure, activity patterns, micro-habitats, personality traits, and reproduction habits are considered in the overall design.

“We’re trying to get people to not just connect to the animal but to where that animal lives and what we’re going to do to improve quality of life for the animal.”

Regardless of the location, EDSA planners seek to bring sustainable design to every habitat immersion project, keeping in mind the well-being of the animals, the needs of their keepers, and the enjoyment of the public. The designer’s goal is to collaborate with other professionals in shaping the environments which immerse animals, caregivers and guests within significant, informative, and pleasurable experiences that advance both the well-being and long term conservation of the animals and species displayed. “There is an essential component to try and understand the needs, wants and limits of animals, and as designers and stewards of the land, we have a responsibility to properly research, collaborate, create, and maintain the highest quality, safest, most naturally authentic environments possible. Our designs must also be economically sustainable for the welfare of everyone – including animal species, owners, operators and visitors. Continuously improving animal parks and enhancing the visitors experience will continue to shed light on animal conservation and awareness,” concludes Sutton.

DESIGNED *for* LIFE

A TOUR OF SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN
FURNITURE/LANDSCAPE

BY DEREK GAGNE, THE JOSEPH J. LALLI
FELLOWSHIP 2013 RECIPIENT

ART IS AND ALWAYS HAS BEEN HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL TEMPERAMENT OF TIME. THROUGHOUT HISTORY, WE FIND THAT WHILE PREFERENCES AND VIEWS MAY NO LONGER BE RELEVANT, PERIOD ART AND DESIGN OFTEN ARE.

By understanding and applying styles and movements that have come before, artists are incorporating notable principles of composition, color, craftsmanship, material, and form. This is extremely true of Scandinavian design – described by many as fairly minimalist with clean, simple lines – of highly functional, eternal style – a reflection of people, place and purpose.

A recent recipient of the Joseph J. Lalli Design Fellowship, Derek Gagne, EDSA Vice President, credits his experiences with the art, literature, and pop culture of Scandinavian life as sparking his travel interest for Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Norway. Gagne became familiar with the region while reading the Millennium Series of books, even dining at the lead character's café of choice while in Stockholm. He had also come across many lifestyle rating charts that placed people in these countries amongst the happiest in the world. "My initial goal and purpose was to research the origins and development of classic Scandinavian furniture design as it applies to landscape architecture. Fortunately, my journey soon evolved – becoming much more about the people and the places that influence design rather than the objects I had grown to admire."



Derek's interest in Scandinavian design started 12 years ago when he came across a discarded chair on a sidewalk in Santa Monica, California. A sleek, teakwood furniture frame caught his eye – a lounge chair of quality and purpose – that has since become an intrinsic part of his home. "If one's home is said to be 'a reflection of one's life it is important that we, as designers, surround ourselves with items that compliment and inform our lifestyle and inspire us daily."

Educating himself on mid-century Scandinavian pieces, Derek's fascination grew with the works of Alvar Aalto, Poul Kjaerholm, Finn Juhl, Borge Mogensen, Hans J. Wegner, and Poul Henningsen among others. "What I found most intriguing about these designers is that their concepts are as relevant today as they were 60 years ago. The lines and forms speak to a culture and time in history when quality was revered and the use of beautiful, simple, clean designs were inspired by nature."

INSPIRED: *Scandinavian Design*

- VERNER PANTON, *The Panton Chair*
- HANS WEGNER, *Wishbone Chair*
- VERNER PANTON, *The Heart Chair*
- POUL HENNINGSEN, *PH5 Lamp*
- FINN JUHL, *Couch*

To fully understand a culture and follow in the footsteps of Joe Lalli, Derek chose to fully immerse himself in the places where these designs originated and connect with the inspiring lifestyle of these designers. Throughout his trip, his admiration for a culture that continues to celebrate the design traditions of their past, while acclimating to the spirit, values and ideals of current-day ensued. "In process, I began looking at far more than furniture and saw a craft that defined a region in the world. It was about finding people passionate about design who have contributed to a heightened awareness of mid-century Scandinavian design and its innate parallel with urban landscapes."

Reaching out to individuals that he had identified as leading designers, Derek built a list of contacts and set the course for his travels. His interviews and encounters included designers, architects, furniture builders, historians, and many others that welcomed him and his wife into their homes, workshops, and offices – sharing their passions and purpose.



it WAS ABOUT FINDING PEOPLE PASSIONATE ABOUT DESIGN WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED *to* a HEIGHTENED AWARENESS *of* MID-CENTURY SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN AND *its* INNATE PARALLEL *with* URBAN LANDSCAPES

The concept of 'local now global' materialized as a common theme throughout frank conversations with many people. The legacy of mid-century design that brought so much attention to Scandinavia is seen as a springboard from which new design starts and grows. Advancing design and including it as part of policy and political agendas is what many designers see as the future for these countries and the key to flourishing. "Copenhagen's ongoing commitment from government and demand from citizens has focused on two-wheel transport that underscores the government's belief in creating a city landscape that favors pedestrians. A lesson that many other cities of the world, especially across North America, need to pay attention to."

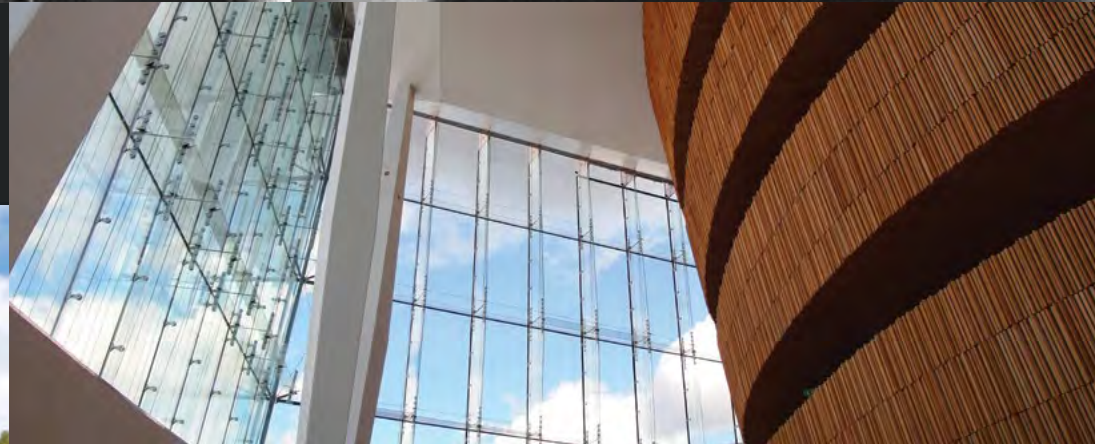
The need for preserving the past while accommodating for the future growth of cities and communities was another subject matter near and dear to the diverse group of designers. "After reading about Andreas Martin-Lof and seeing a profile on The Straw Hat Factory, I reached out to him in Stockholm. The modestly designed residential space elicits a place cemented in time, with a history and heritage that dates back to 1887. The apartment complex is the result of a transformed factory where the industrial character is captured in a keen attention to detail. Andreas' design approach is probably not unlike many others. He was able to take a piece of history and improve upon it; restore its inherent quality while making it work for the modern urban-dwelling family of Stockholm."

TRAVEL LOG:

the numbers



60% of the time we walked
25% of the time we biked
15% of the time on public transit



5 Cities visited
Copenhagen, Stockholm, Helsinki, Oslo, Bergen



3,018 Photos taken

WHERE WILL EDSA TAKE YOU?

To celebrate Joe's legacy, the Joseph J. Lalli Fellowship is an annual designation granted to an EDSA employee who presents a compelling proposal to travel and immerse themselves in a new culture in order to better understand the attributes of that place and its influence on design. Winners are required to share lesson learned with colleagues through some combination of journaling, photography, sketching and case study analysis. The 2015 Fellowship was awarded to Danny Bulemore.



4 Countries Visited

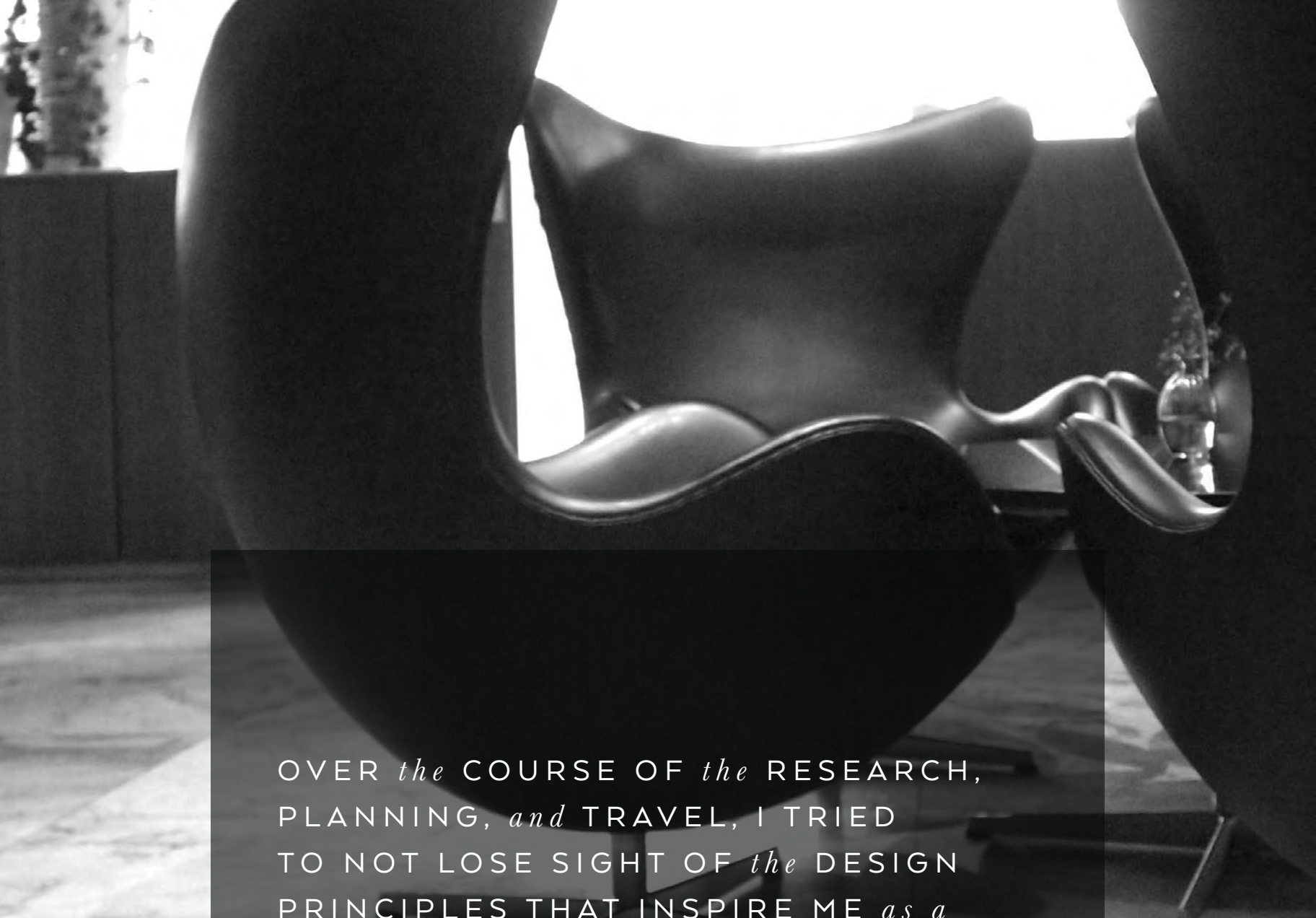
26 Kaffe Latte's consumed



11 Bicycles rode

9,280 Miles flown
360 Miles on boats
560 Miles on trains





OVER *the* COURSE OF *the* RESEARCH, PLANNING, *and* TRAVEL, I TRIED TO NOT LOSE SIGHT OF *the* DESIGN PRINCIPLES THAT INSPIRE ME *as a* DESIGNER - FUNCTIONALITY, QUALITY, *and* CRAFTSMANSHIP.



COMPARING *and*
CONTRASTING
THESE PRINCIPLES
WITH MID-CENTURY
FURNITURE
DESIGN PROVIDED
an OVERALL
NARRATIVE TO
the TRIP THAT
GAVE PURPOSE
TO *the* ROLE
WE PLAY *as*
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS *and*
WHAT WE CREATE
ON *a* DAILY BASIS.



The qualities that catapulted Scandinavia to the title of ‘cradle of modern design’ continue to hold true today because they have not focused on one specific field of design, such as fashion, furniture, or architecture, but instead they have designed a soundtrack to live by. They have simplified the essential elements of design into a narrative that elevates the quality of everyday life.

“Whenever I come home from a trip I return with a new appreciation for something that in turn influences my next travel experience. When planning a trip I oftentimes get caught up in the lists of things to do, places to see, and new museums to visit, but in the end the trip is always about the lived experience. The purpose of sharing these experiences is to bring others to a starting place, something that acts as a point of commonality, collaboration, and celebration of travel. I thank EDSA and the Joe Lalli Fellowship for giving me a starting place and expanding my appreciation of travel and culture.”

During the course of his Fellowship, Derek also recognized that thriving cities of the 21st century will work to move beyond conventional definitions and be shaped by networks of people with various skills sets, experiences, and backgrounds. “While in Copenhagen, I met with Helle Soholt, CEO and Founding Partner of Gehl Architects. I was immediately intrigued by her work and even more so, by the way they branded themselves and their special design services. Their work focuses on people and pedestrian friendly design with a high priority for continued research into city living and public space.” The company is responsible for much of the modern thinking that has transformed Copenhagen into a pedestrian and bicycle friendly city led by a driving principle that people, not cars or buildings, should be placed at the center of how cities operate.

“The challenge for the future for many cities will be to continue fueling development around what they already have – as opposed to what they want to have. This includes lifestyle transitions as interpreted through efficient public transit, bicycle transportation, local cuisine, and urban

form. In many ways the role of these places will be to sustain the relevance of local assets and traditions within global context. Cities and countries that succeed in this respect will be the ones that float to the top of the annual ‘Quality of Life’ and ‘Happiness’ surveys, where Scandinavian countries often find themselves.”


Just as these countries pioneered a new way of thinking about making furniture and home wares in the post-war period, today they are extending the boundaries – far beyond chairs and tables – of how design impacts daily life. No Danish design icon better epitomizes this than Architect Arne Jacobsen who designed the Radisson Blu (formerly Royal Hotel) in the 1950’s. Considered one of the first boutique hotels in the world, Jacobsen’s claim to fame was that he mastered all elements in the architectural process, from the big design moves to the minute details. While many of the original spaces within the hotel have been renovated and re-designed – room 606 is the sole remaining room in which the original décor has been maintained with details such as the door handles, bathroom fixtures and lighting that represent some of the best examples of Jacobsen’s organic design aesthetic.

While in Copenhagen, Derek also traveled to the home of icon Finn Juhl. Juhl was a Danish architect, interior and industrial designer, mostly known for his furniture designs. He was one of the leading figures in the creation of “Danish Design” in the 1940s and the designer who introduced Danish Modern to America. “Once you have the opportunity to sit in his chairs or touch one of his tables you realize that it is the interface of materials and the scale and form that give his designs a unique human sensibility. It is Finn Juhl’s designs that my personal furniture collection closely matches.”

“Over the course of the research, planning, and travel, I tried to not lose sight of the design principles that inspire me as a

designer – functionality, quality, and craftsmanship. Comparing and contrasting these principles with mid-century furniture design provided an overall narrative to the trip that gave purpose to the role we play as Landscape Architects and what we create on a daily basis. The link to our profession becomes very apparent – it’s all about putting people first in design. The study of public life and how people use a park or even a bench represents a cross-disciplinary approach to planning.

The common thread amongst all design, whether it is furniture or landscape architecture projects, is that the work is never finished, the design is constantly evolving, and there is always room for improvement – all while putting an emphasis on the user who will ultimately determine the success of any designed space or product.”



SOUTH OF THE

BORDER

An expanding middle class, vibrant economies, and a stable political outlook are some of the factors propelling an unprecedented wave of development in Latin America – a trend that is not expected to subside anytime soon. Despite variations among countries, most of Latin America has experienced sustained growth during the last couple of decades. National markets have been created and fortified, production has been decentralized, buying power has improved, and many Latin American economies have become well integrated with the global economy.

“Emerging Latin America markets continue to be an enticing alternative for private equity and venture capital investors,” says Marco Larrea, EDSA Principal. “When the U.S. and Europe experienced economic challenges, Latin America was relatively insulated and continued to prosper – so many investors headed south of the border to Colombia, Panamá, Perú, and Ecuador for new opportunities.” Based on promising signs of private consumption and manufacturing, the region is expected to continue to experience long-term growth through 2020 – according to the U.N. Economic Commission.

The strength of investment and progressive development in Latin America is reaping great dividends, including a better quality of life and a lessening income gap between the rich and poor. Yet this growth alone is not the only dealmaker. “Our neighbors to the south are enjoying something of a spotlight in their global influence in terms of exportation and world trade. Their hosting of prominent sporting events and media coverage, increased tourism, access to oil and energy, and popular public figures are all contributing factors,” adds Pablo Massari, EDSA Associate Principal.

Additionally, the region, along with the Caribbean, is home to approximately 23 percent of the world’s forests, 31 percent of freshwater resources and six of the world’s 17 mega-diverse countries. “Although these resources are not evenly distributed, the overall richness and economic importance of Latin America’s ecosystems and its natural capital are undeniable. This wondrous natural landscape is fueling demand for cultural tourism with travelers seeking a connection to the region’s land, people, and points of interest,” suggests Astrid Hoffmann, EDSA Vice President. As a result, this travel trend has become an important source of revenue for what might otherwise have remained poor economies. Residential and commercial development have followed close behind as efforts to draw populations to emerging cities continues.

THE OVERALL RICHNESS AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF LATIN AMERICA'S ECOSYSTEMS AND ITS NATURAL CAPITAL ARE UNDENIABLE. THIS WONDROUS NATURAL LANDSCAPE IS FUELING DEMAND FOR CULTURAL TOURISM.

ASTRID HOFFMANN, EDSA VICE PRESIDENT

LATIN AMERICA

Creating such unique experiences in awe-inspiring settings is what EDSA is renowned for. “In Perú, EDSA is designing La Estrella, a resort near the sacred Inca site, Choquequirao. Choquequirao or ‘Cuna de Oro’ (Cradle of Gold) is truly the lost Incan city,” Larrea says. Hiram Bingham, the American archaeologist credited with discovering Machu Picchu, also brought attention to this unexplored pre-Columbian city when he first visited in 1909, but the Peruvian government didn’t start excavation until the 1970s. Believed to be the last main religious center of the Incan Empire, its 15th-century ruins include a central plaza and dozens of sloped terraces 3,000 meters above sea level over the Apurímac River. “We’re taking a holistic approach to master planning La Estrella since Choquequirao was the epicenter of ancient Inca culture and tradition. Visitors to La Estrella will be able to explore cathedrals intermixed with the Inca foundations, stunning colonial architecture, and zigzag walls – all part of the multicultural and layered history of the region.”

“The locals and visitors of Latin America are more adventurous, more willing to explore and try something different,” suggests Massari, “so resorts, city centers, and communities are being designed accordingly. People want to experience the breathtaking natural wonders and scenery,” he explains. “If they like hiking, they want to be able to go on ‘undiscovered’ trails to the mountains. If they are into food, they want to be close to top dining venues or learn local cooking techniques so that they can show their friends back home. Learning is part of living.”

In Colombia, near the UNESCO World Heritage City of Cartagena, EDSA is planning Barú Island, a half-billion dollar development. The project is located on a peninsula on 500 hectares of pristine land. An exceptional area with trails and preserves, the topography includes mountains, flat lands, estuaries, and mangroves. Luxury and glamour will be blended with ecology and sustainability with state-of-the-art technology. “While most other resorts on the island are only accessible from the coast,” Massari says, “Barú Island is also accessible through the bay. That’s a special allure for this property – you can travel by boat to the resort even during rough seas.”

The firm’s design experts are creating genuine, holistic, cultural developments based on each country’s history and a responsiveness to the land. “We seek to understand the character of each site and allow the design to form from within,” Larrea explains. “If a property is near a historic city, we look to the architecture, heritage, and environment for inspiration – incorporating similar elements in the design vernacular. Each country has its unique sense of place and we want to showcase that.”


One of EDSA’s 60 active projects in the region is the Park Hyatt Foz do Iguaçu at Iguaçu Falls in Brazil. “It’s a very interesting location in the jungle bordering one of the world’s most impressive natural wonders of 275 independent waterfalls,” says Larrea. “We wanted to keep as much of the green canopy as possible so we designed structures on stilts along the vegetation corridor to maintain natural views. We also found unique diamond crystals throughout the site whose form and shape influenced the architecture and overall siting.” Conscience in preserving the indigenous



INDURA BEACH & GOLF RESORT – TELA BAY, HONDURAS

characteristics and natural beauty of the land, the river, which bends naturally at certain locations, will be another focal point. The surrounding trees, which have been altered over time by the force of the winds, will be retained and highlighted for their sculpture-like quality. “Our design reflects a modern interpretation of the site’s history and topography – giving the property its identity.”

Travel to Latin America is rapidly gaining even more popularity. Four of CNN’s 11 top places to travel in 2014 included Panamá, Brazil, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. For the second year in a row, Perú was the top pick for global gastronomists – people with a keen appreciation for food in search of excellent culinary experiences. “With an embracing ancestry and locals interested in sharing their natural, cultural, and historic charms, Latin America has proven its ability to deliver rich, authentic, cultural experiences based on each country’s unique attributes,” says Hoffmann. People are traveling to various countries to immerse themselves in the local culture and be involved with memorable, explorative activities that are respectful to the origins of these places.



WE SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THE
CHARACTER OF EACH SITE AND
ALLOW THE DESIGN TO FORM FROM
WITHIN. EACH COUNTRY HAS ITS
UNIQUE SENSE OF PLACE AND WE
WANT TO SHOWCASE THAT.

MARCO LARREA, EDSA PRINCIPAL

With so much opportunity, location decisions with respect to real estate investments and occupier footprints are guiding development. To remain competitive, property owners in Latin America must 'refresh' their offerings often to stay relevant and interesting to international and regional travelers. Similarly, residential and commercial offerings must keep pace with global standards as many full-time and part-time residents have considerable exposure to luxury developments in the United States. South Florida, in particular, is in the midst of a residential and commercial boom that is not going unnoticed by foreign nationals.

With this reality in mind, EDSA recently completed the redesign of the 752-acre Indura Beach and Golf Resort along the Caribbean coast of Honduras. The site at Bahia de Tela emphasizes the area's heritage with architectural styles, structural footprints, and design processes that result in little disturbance to the native landscape while also accurately reflecting the local fabric. "The architecture for all of the structures remains true to the region's history. The nearby Garifuna community is still completely built of thatched huts," Massari says. "Indura replicates this building style along with the addition of stilts to its buildings allowing for no disturbance to natural and animal migration patterns."



BUENAVENTURA - EL CHIRÚ, PÁNUMA



AS LONG AS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STABILITY CONTINUES, PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE GLOBE WILL CONTINUE THEIR LOVE AFFAIR WITH LATIN AMERICA AND ITS CULTURE.

PABLO MASSARI, EDSA ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

COLOMBIA



Owners and developers are aware that the most successful properties – be they resorts, communities, or urban commercial districts – are those with indigenous design that are authentic and offer a connection to the land. This also shines a light on the need to control development to ensure the natural sustainability of the region. Design firms like EDSA bring added value because they understand the necessary balance between preservation, conservation, stewardship of the land, and the need for economic and demographic growth.

“Developers in Latin America are extremely conscious of the local environment,” Hoffmann says. “We don’t have to have any conversations with clients about protecting the natural surroundings. They know that visitors and residents are attracted to the beauty of the land and that if it is destroyed, they run the risk of damaging the unique offerings of Latin America.”

Latin America is well on its way to becoming a key destination for foreign real estate investment as it possesses several key real estate value drivers – rapid economic growth, rising middle class, favorable demographics and a growing population. “As long as economic and political stability continues, people from around the globe will continue their love affair with Latin America and its culture,” concludes Massari.

Real estate entrepreneurs have long eyed Latin America for development but held back, concerned about weak economies and changing political landscapes. As numerous countries reported sustained economic growth and steadier governments, developers are jumping in – but with a new game plan. Consumers are driving the economic activity in the region and motivating real estate developers to build new shopping malls, housing projects, hotels and offices. “For that reason, many of the developments designed by EDSA have several components – hospitality, residential, and commercial,” explains Larrea.

In the residential realm, easy financing conditions and favorable terms of trade have fueled credit and domestic demand in much of Latin America for almost a decade. “The emergence of residential fragments from a growing middle class is having an impact on expanding markets and a diversification in product offerings. In addition, the growing market of retiring abroad – because you want to live better for less, diversify your investments, or enjoy a greater degree of adventure is drawing many visitors to the land, the people, and the culture,” says Hoffmann.

For example, on a plateau 66 feet above the Pacific Ocean, EDSA is designing the residential component at the internationally-known Gran Pacifica Resort in Nicaragua. The luxury home development, southwest of the country’s capital, is envisioned as a retreat for those seeking the peace and beauty of nature in a community that is respectful of the environment. The 72-acre residential area will feature Mediterranean and Colonial architectural styles and include an outdoor amphitheater that introduces a green connector system with pedestrian paths and boardwalks that meander throughout the site. “Along with a diversity in products to accommodate both visiting families and permanent retirees, the project ensures minimum impact to topographic resources, soils, and the geologic setting with the appropriate use of porous paving, bio-swales along the roads, and native plants as xeriscape for a sustainable landscape – keeping development as natural as possible,” affirms Hoffmann.



BOOMING BOOMERS

80 IS THE NEW 60

I AM YOUTH-ORIENTED, PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, AND HAVE A CAN-DO SPIRIT. I HAVE A HARD-CHARGING WORK ETHIC AND REMARKABLE DRIVE TO GET AHEAD. I WILL LOOK, FEEL, AND BE YOUNGER AT 60, 70, AND 80 THAN OTHERS BEFORE ME. I AM CONCERNED WITH MY CHILDREN, JOB, MONEY, HEALTH, AND FITNESS. I AM ADVENTURESOME, EXPERIMENTAL, AND ACCUSTOMED TO MOVING WHEREVER IT IS THAT INTRIGUES ME. I AM A BABY BOOMER!

Thanks to tremendous advances in medicine over the past half century, the Boomer wave isn't slowing down. Roughly 10,000 Baby Boomers will turn 65 today, and about 10,000 more will cross that threshold every day for the next 19 years. Come midcentury, people over 65 will outnumber those age 15 and younger. So, what does it all mean? The consequences are sweeping. From skyrocketing health-care costs and tremendous movements in workforce availability to changes in household structures and the 'empty nest' phenomena, huge shifts in the attitudes and behaviors of seniors are influencing multiple aspects of modern society – including design.

The increasing numbers of seniors, combined with changes in the way they want to live out their later years is creating new demand for living care and housing options. “The realities of the diverging needs of older people must inform the way communities are planned and improved”, says Li Xiang, EDSA Associate Principal. “It's about giving people what they are able to enjoy – walkability, mobility, entertainment, in-community services, and natural spaces where multi-generational interaction takes place.” Designers must answer this challenge with environments that not only present opportunities for those pursuits, but that also make them connected and accessible to an aging population.



New ideas about senior care and housing are not simply about looking at health care and retirement facilities, but rather about placing an increased emphasis on socialization and enjoyment. Many individuals considering retirement options for themselves or a family member have not been satisfied with the limited alternatives of the past. The traditional design concept of single-family subdivisions has become obsolete to this audience. Instead, a more micro-urbanist approach to planning now sets the standard for delivering all today's seniors want and require. Successful communities now incorporate single-family homes, condominiums or apartments, and in-patient healthcare facilities within the same neighborhood – with some even allowing for residents to move between housing types as their needs and mobilities change. At the same time, amenities and activities must take a central role in daily life, and the community design must support this. Wheel-and-spoke, concentric circles, and other designs that simplify transportation within a community are more preferable to mature adult audiences than the sprawling, spaced-out layouts that younger home owners choose. “There is no other type of development where the direct correlation between doing the right thing and its impact on people’s lives is more evident. You can build an environment for the aging that is limiting, segregated and insulated or you can build one that encourages seniors to enhance their quality of life. It’s about offering alternative delivery options for independent and skilled care with richer programs and benefits. People want to spend their later years in home-like place, not someplace where they are treated like bothersome patients”, says Xiang.

Looking toward the real needs and livability of this growing population, trends are moving away from the concept of senior housing as synonymous with nursing homes towards other housing options – whether it’s independent living, multi-generational housing, co-housing, or aging-in-place. In a recent survey of more than 4,500 people from a wide range of income groups, ethnicities, and types of community, 71 percent of those surveyed between the ages of 50 and 64 want to continue living where they are. Eighty-seven percent of those over 65 also prefer to remain in their current homes. The ‘Boomer’ buzzword for this phenomenon is – NORC, or ‘naturally occurring retirement community’ in which independent living is encouraged and established relationships between neighbors remain in place. However, this too presents unique design challenges as members of a community age. Large communities may need to consider changing roadways from extended straight-a-ways to gentle curves in order to reduce speeding within the community which may endanger senior pedestrians. Similarly, bike lanes and jogging paths may need to be extended to accommodate golf carts and other personal mobility devices so that residents may enjoy accessibility to favorite community features. Bus or people-mover routes may need to be established, with shaded seating at drop-off and pick-up areas. Even parking areas may need to be re-designed to accommodate increased auto-traffic as more seniors turn to their vehicles to reach clubhouses and facilities.



VILLAGE OF MARBELLA - COCONUT CREEK, FLORIDA

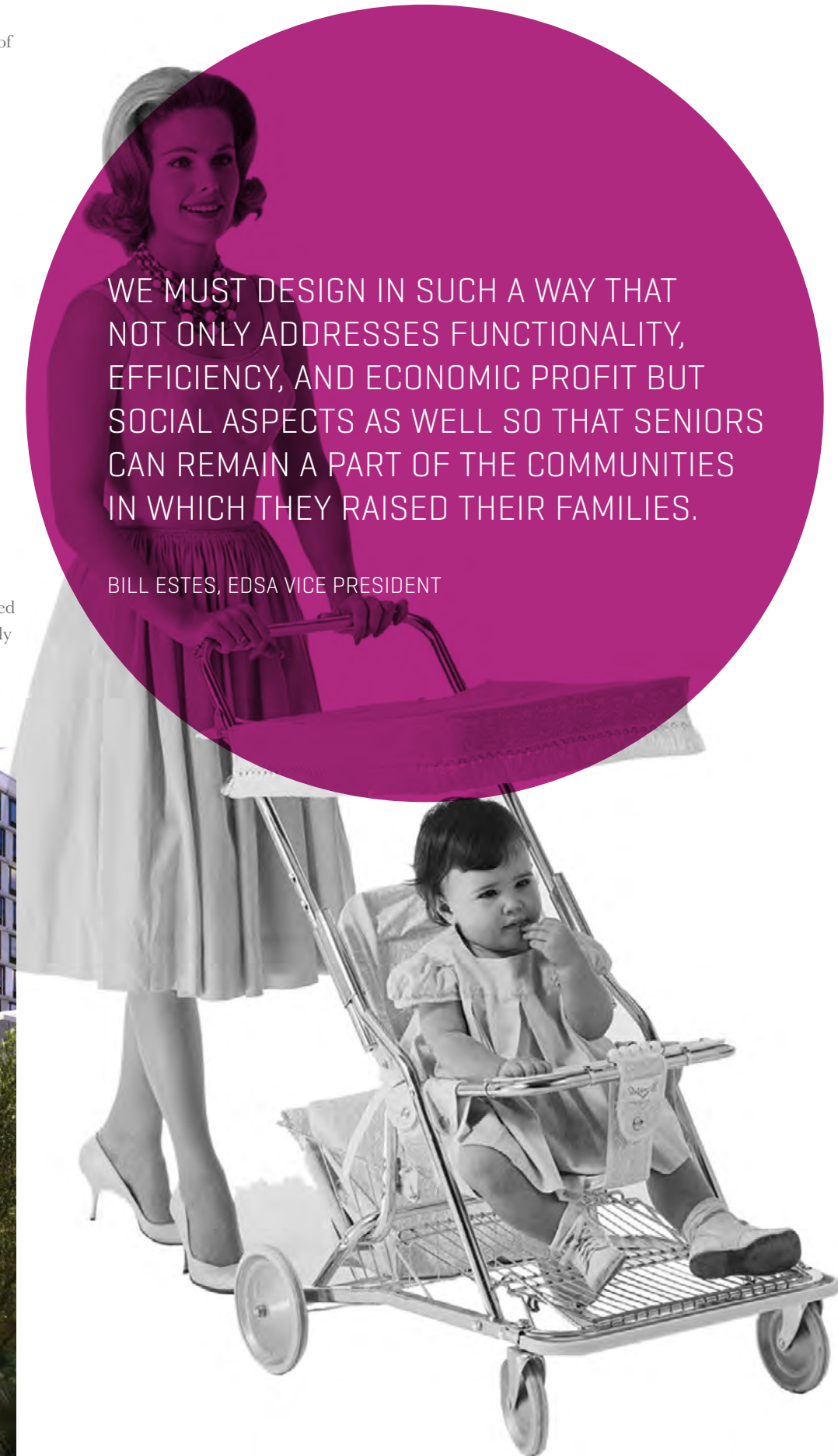
EDSA has helped address issues such as these as part of their residential communities work. Harbour Ridge in St. Lucie County, Florida is a private-equity golf and yachting community along the St. Lucie River. And while originally designed as a residential destination with no specific senior considerations, the population at Harbour Ridge is ‘aging in place’ with the average homeowner being 65 or older. Within the community, single family estates, smaller patio homes, and villa-style townhomes create ‘villages’ complete with community swimming pools and barbecue areas. As part of the master planning and design efforts, EDSA teams had to keep in mind such things as ample golf cart paths and safe crossings for pedestrians, as well as ecological preservation of native bird habitats which are of great concern to Harbour Ridge’s various owners.

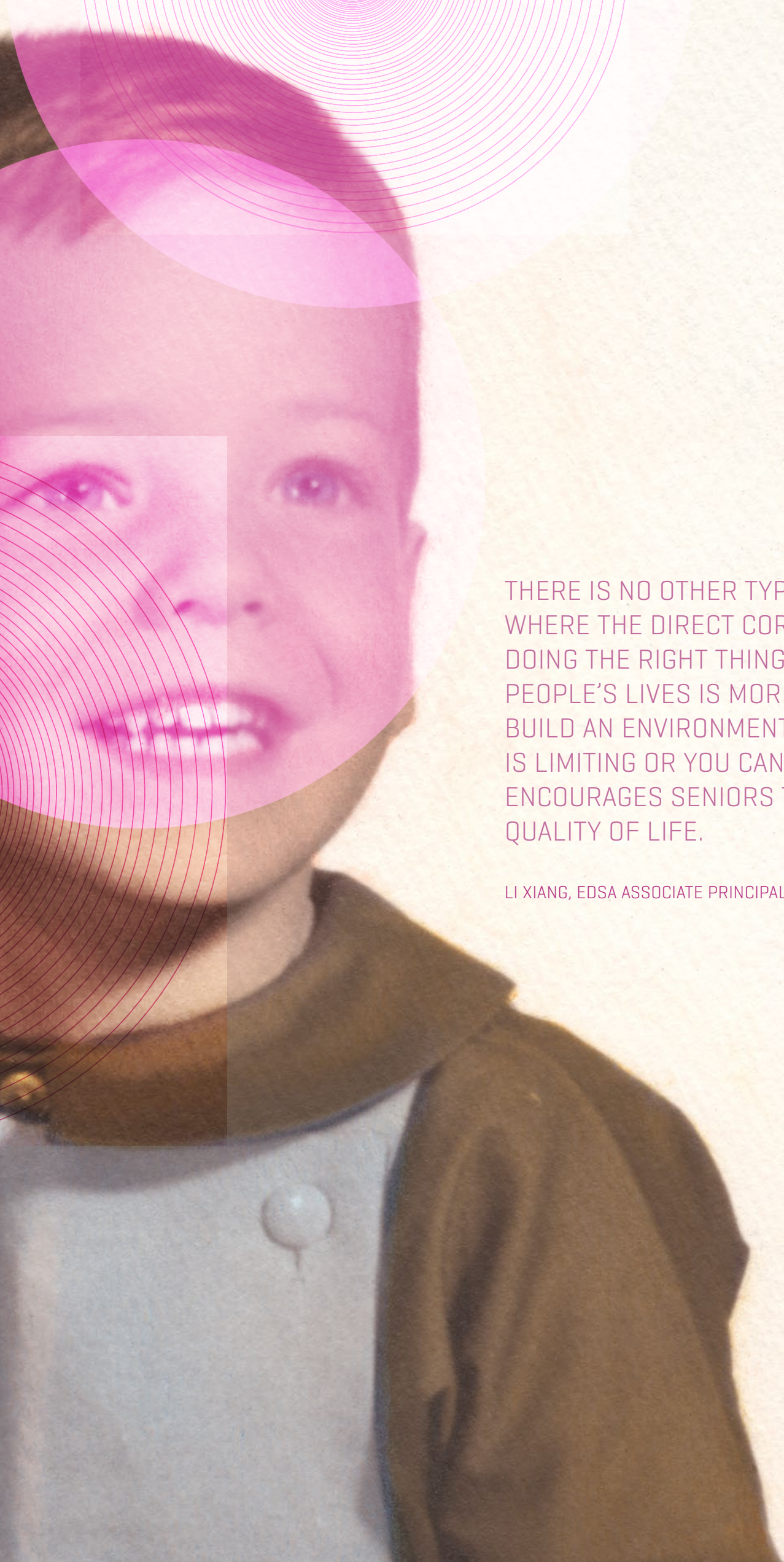
“We’ve also seen the Chinese government grappling to fund development of senior housing amid worries that the burgeoning elderly population will make the country’s traditional ways of caring for the seniors unsustainable. Previously, sending your elders to a nursing home was unheard of”, says Xiang. “But as the society progresses, more and more people don’t have any choice but to accept reality – we have to work, we commute, we have our kids. Other reasonable options need to exist.” she adds.

According to Bill Estes, EDSA Vice President, “The issue is not about a particular housing type for a particular target market, it is about community integration, engagement, and creating a sense of purpose and belonging for all residents. Aging must be viewed as an asset not a liability. The needs of our well-respected and deserving older populations are the same as we want for ourselves today – to lead an active, healthy lifestyle with choices that are affordable and connected to quality services. We must design in such a way that not only addresses functionality, efficiency, and economic profit but social aspects as well so that seniors can remain a part of the communities in which they raised their families.”

WE MUST DESIGN IN SUCH A WAY THAT NOT ONLY ADDRESSES FUNCTIONALITY, EFFICIENCY, AND ECONOMIC PROFIT BUT SOCIAL ASPECTS AS WELL SO THAT SENIORS CAN REMAIN A PART OF THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THEY RAISED THEIR FAMILIES.

BILL ESTES, EDSA VICE PRESIDENT





THERE IS NO OTHER TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT WHERE THE DIRECT CORRELATION BETWEEN DOING THE RIGHT THING AND ITS IMPACT ON PEOPLE’S LIVES IS MORE EVIDENT. YOU CAN BUILD AN ENVIRONMENT FOR THE AGING THAT IS LIMITING OR YOU CAN BUILD ONE THAT ENCOURAGES SENIORS TO ENHANCE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.

LI XIANG, EDSA ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL



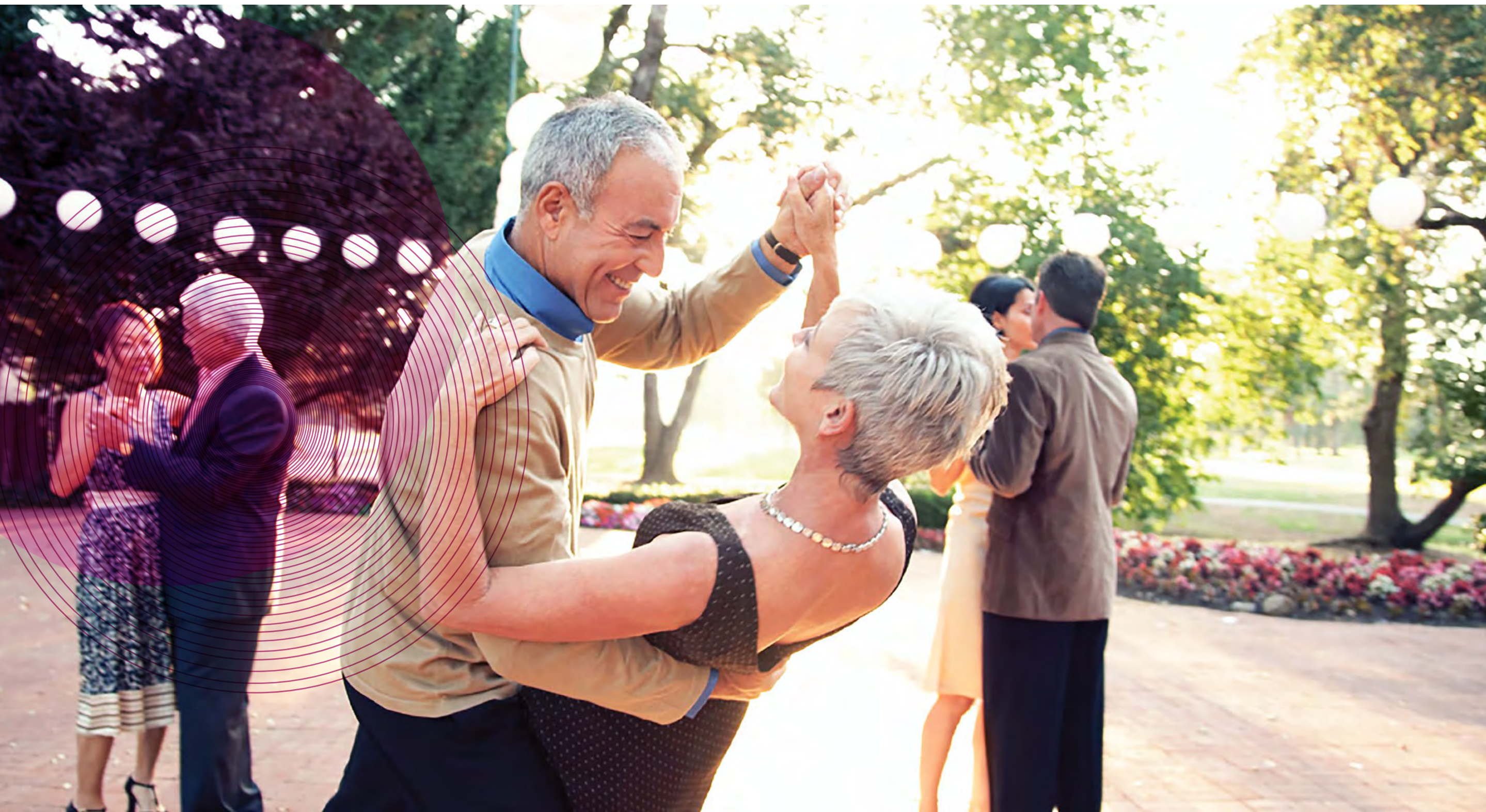
Additionally, a growing closeness between Boomers and their young adult children reflects a major shift in family dynamics. These stronger family connections will continue to play out as Boomers get older. No longer are retirees packing their bags, selling their homes and moving to retirement communities, in sunny climates, far away from their adult children. “Most Boomers don’t want that – partly because of the desire to be near their kids and grandkids – and partly because many will continue to work or volunteer well past retirement age,” says Estes.

Another independent living alternative for active seniors who don’t want to move into a community or facility – or can’t afford it – is the not-so-new concept of multi-generational housing. “The idea that a family will pool their resources and either modify their existing home to suit multiple generations, or move into a place that’s built to house both young families and older adults is gaining momentum. As such, we must also ensure local zoning codes and policies, during the planning and development stages, allow for the adaptation of apartments and additions so families can stay together,” explains Estes.

Senior cohousing – a modern take on communal living – is also growing in popularity. Members usually maintain private residences but share certain recreational or dining spaces and make collective decisions about community rules and development. Cohousing can cater exclusively to retirees or, as Boomers seem to prefer, an inter-generational crowd. That’s the case at Takoma Village Cohousing, a community of 43 townhouses and apartments around a common green in Washington DC. Residents range in age from one to 85-plus. Downsizing seniors say such cohousing provides a nice balance between owning a private home and having a built-in social network.

“We are seeing the needs of an aging population dovetail with trends similar among Millennials for existential experiences and living life to the fullest. For many – especially those living in exurbs or isolated communities – it’s about moving to an area that offers more social and recreational activities that will keep them active and engaged,” says Mihaela Zaharescu, EDSA Vice President. Mixed-use urban quarters, where seniors can share life with young people and reaffirm their connection to the world of the mind and culture are gaining in popularity. This downsizing trend coincides with less auto-centric living, access to amenities of a thriving downtown and nearby health offerings. “The demand is there. Many generations aren’t interested in being ‘in the middle of nowhere’ nor do they want to be isolated in 55-plus housing.”

Regardless of where, when and how – quality, universal design is meant to make life easier for everyone. The latest iteration has a high-design aesthetic that makes it not only more appealing to Baby Boomers, but also more palatable to younger generations. “For seniors it is about living in an exciting environment with opportunities to interact, exercise, continue lifelong learning, access recreation and cultural venues, and the integration of all these components. This interaction happens with and between families, the public, and residents where multiple people offerings, communal spots, and walkability are given priority, suggests Zaharescu.



WE ARE SEEING THE NEEDS OF AN AGING POPULATION DOVETAIL WITH TRENDS SIMILAR AMONG MILLENNIALS FOR EXISTENTIAL EXPERIENCES AND LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST.

MIHAELA ZAHARESCU, EDSA VICE PRESIDENT

Xiang adds “Age, economic status, nationality, and cultural background aside, every community must offer residents opportunities for life enjoyment where health and well-being, sense of community, giving service, and recreation remain the core values behind development.” From a design perspective, siting must support lifestyle choices and accessibility with an engaging, compact, well-balanced, and walkable way of life. The use of varying textures, surfaces, slopes, and shade must all be given consideration as visual, proportional and traditional quality play a role in establishing a sense of place.

“From a development standpoint, we must reassess our abilities to meet the safe, appropriate, and affordable lifestyle requirements of current and future seniors with design choices, transportation options, and supportive services that make sense. Just as individual seniors have different needs, the communities that serve them will need to adapt so that the ‘life cycle’ of communities becomes one where residents are able to live comfortably throughout the full spectrum of their lives,” concludes Estes.



BRUNSWICK CROSSING – BRUNSWICK, MARYLAND





digitally

or not?

designed

For centuries, hand drawing with a pen, pencil, or marker has served as a prized and idealized method for conveying ideas by the design community. Not simply representative of beautiful images, these works serve as expressions of form, function, scale, social magnitude, and more. But, in today's technology-driven design world – are pen and ink sketches passè?

Shouldn't design-based software programs perform the drawing function, freeing designers?

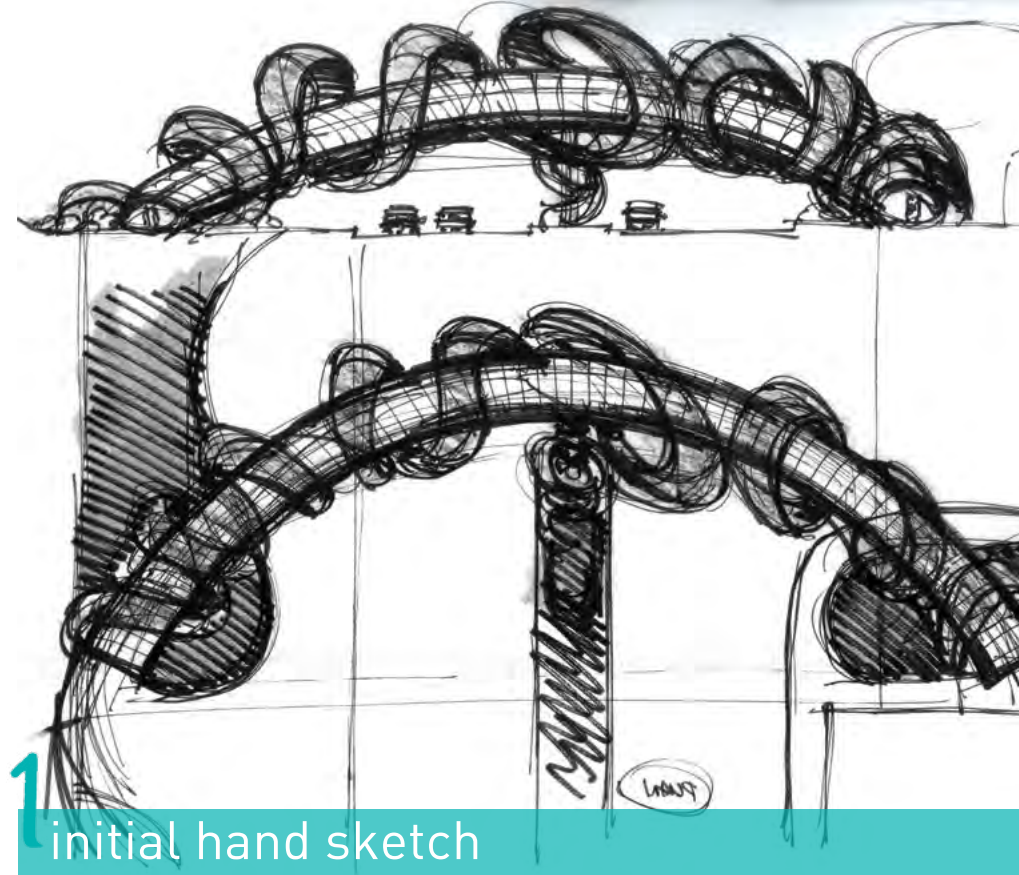
"Not exactly," says Eric Propes, EDSA Associate Principal. "We're always looking for new and emerging technology and exploring ways to work more efficiently. However, the truth is that all the technological advances in the industry cannot replace or devalue the freedom of hand sketching. Instead, we enhance our hand graphics by using technology as a complement to the design process, when and where it is most appropriate." EDSA is taking the best of its corporate culture – artfully created hand drawings – and combining it with leading-edge technology to advance the entire creative process.

A large amount of EDSA's work is expressed in visually engaging and enriching ways. The firm's designers utilize the latest software available, from GIS mapping and site analysis software to 3D modeling tools. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enables EDSA experts to quickly visualize, question, analyze, and interpret site data in real world applications to understand site relationships, patterns, and trends quickly, while further into the design process 3D modeling allows both designers and clients to better understand visual relationships and a sense of scale for specific components of a project. Geo reference software, AutoCAD, Civil 3D, Land FX, Adobe Creative Suite, Rhino 3D and SketchUp are a small sampling of other mediums that designers use to accurately express their ideas and collaborate with consultants and clients. The list is never ending and always expanding.

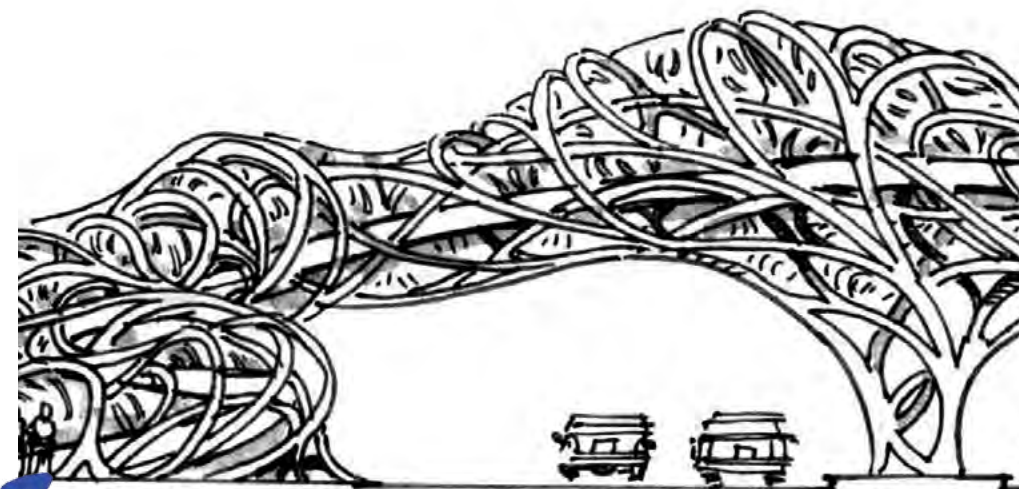
"Designers today want value from technology," says EDSA Vice President Derrick Cissel, who aided in design efforts on several high-profile projects including the Four Seasons Resort Orlando at Walt Disney World® Resort, Orlando International Airport's south terminal, and Atlantis, The Palm in Dubai. "Often, one of technology's greatest benefits is that of speed," he explains. "The concern is that computer-generated graphics can appear manufactured and a little robotic. Even state-of-the-art technologies require careful refinement and the trained eye of a designer to create realistic results. Hand drawings have many layers that extend beyond technical prowess and capture the unique touches of designers. That in itself is special and should not be lost as we advance toward a more technological age."

As part of the visioning process, EDSA begins every assignment with a distinctive image and stated purpose followed by a creative progression where alternative design solutions are formulated, evaluated, and ultimately implemented. Having a clear, well-thought-out, and well-delineated vision at the onset is critical to a project's strategic success and long-term sustainability. Clients want designers to 'hear' what they are saying and have the ability to visually express what will be built.

"Design visioning is built around our ability to express ideas. That is the essence of our profession. And one of the best ways to express design – is to illustrate it. In doing so, we must bring ideas to life, nurture them, and modify them. Computer applications are great tools, just not all the way throughout the process," says Propes. "Programs, software and technology can be used as a great supplemental design tool when working in your studio. Software has made many advances in our profession but falls short during the initial creative process. So while technology can help translate our designs with high visual accuracy, we should not become too easily fascinated by what a program can do and forget to insert our own individuality."



1 initial hand sketch



2 refined preferred concept sketch



3 draft computer model



4 photorealistic image

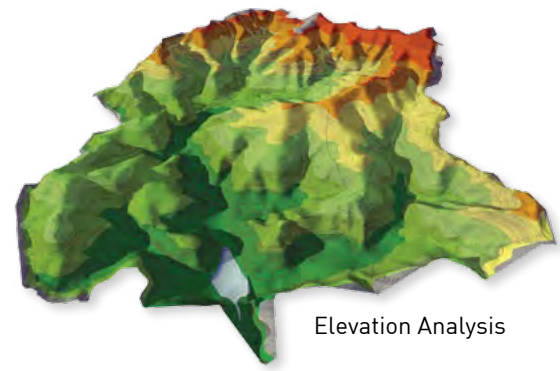
By starting with a hand-drawn sketch, a creative foundation is laid that quickly evolves into something more elaborate and complex. The urge to preserve ‘finished-looking’ work is overcome by the swiftness of an eraser. Exploration of an idea happens with a few strokes that can be edited as the design proceeds, even allowing certain aspects to be revisited without changing other related elements. “The mind of the artist begins to approach the concept from a comprehensive standpoint as opposed to working within the limits of a computer program. We find technology is best used once the conceptual design has been established,” Cissel explains.

Propes agrees. “There is no right or wrong tool to use in design. The importance is in what tool can best communicate your design. Some people can effectively communicate their design through hand drawings; for others, computer-generated graphics have opened new means of expression.”

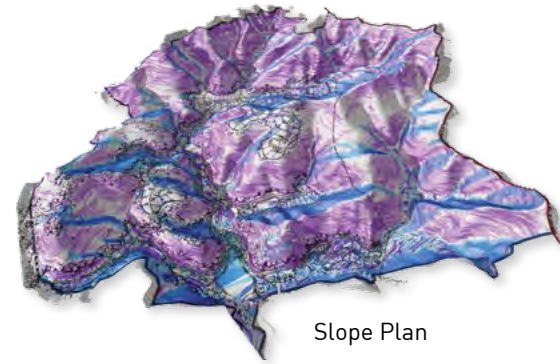
At project initiation, an EDSA team visits a new site to personally experience the area and fully embrace the culture and history of that place. EDSA is currently part of a multi-disciplinary team that is designing the 11,000-hectare Xishuangbanna development in China’s Yunnan Province, a project of Zhonghong Holding Co., Ltd. Located in the largest existing natural rainforest region of the Middle Kingdom, Xishuangbanna is considered sacred ground – with terrain that changes more than 5,000 meters in elevation from the exterior road to the heart of its rainforest-covered peak. An EDSA team hiked for days in the rainforested mountains – studying the architecture and layouts of homes in mountain villages – learning how public and private open spaces were configured so perfectly on the steep hillsides.

In seeking to identify and document the best land uses according to topography, slopes, and elevations, EDSA used state-of-the-art planning and drawing apps such as Bitmap and Map & Tracks to compile the data. “At Xishuangbanna, there are incredibly dramatic changes in topography,” explains Danny Bulemore, EDSA Associate. “We had to take different analyses of the site and combine all of the data into one document. Using pen and paper would have been cumbersome and the rain made most of our handwritten notes illegible. With digital topographic tools, we were able to complete our analyses studies much more quickly.”

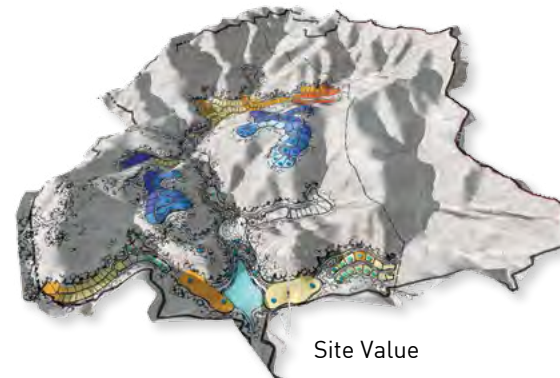
Inspired by Ian McHarg’s suitability analysis approach in evaluating all parcels to provide a more objective assessment, the evaluation system determined land use tolerances for development and enabled the team to select the best development alternatives and site plan options for various areas. This methodology served as a benchmark for future design phases. Such integration of new technologies and digital mapping resulted in more accurate documentation of the site and in less time.



Elevation Analysis



Slope Plan



Site Value



Plan Overlay



Advanced Plan Overlay

there
IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG TOOL TO
USE IN DESIGN. THE IMPORTANCE
IS IN WHAT TOOL CAN BEST
COMMUNICATE YOUR DESIGN.

ERIC PROPE, EDSA ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

“Technology helps us a lot but it does not replace our sketches. What you observe as you draw and the thoughts that are conceived from the process and first impressions make you appreciate the life within your designs,” Bulemore explains. “We are not rushing to a computer to design something immediately that may not work later on.”

There’s no denying that in some instances technology helps clients better visualize what a completed development will look like. At The Estates at Acqualina, a 5.6-acre project by The Trump Group in Sunny Isles, Florida, our client had a concern about how to manage a significant change in elevation. “Our team visually walked them through the reasons why walls were necessary,” recalls Bulemore. “We explained how we would conceal the walls within the landscape design. But, seeing the walls on a flat plan, with just a couple of lines and elevations, did not convince the client. So we created a 3D model and presented the ideas live. This enabled the client to gain a better understanding of why the walls were required and our design intent.”

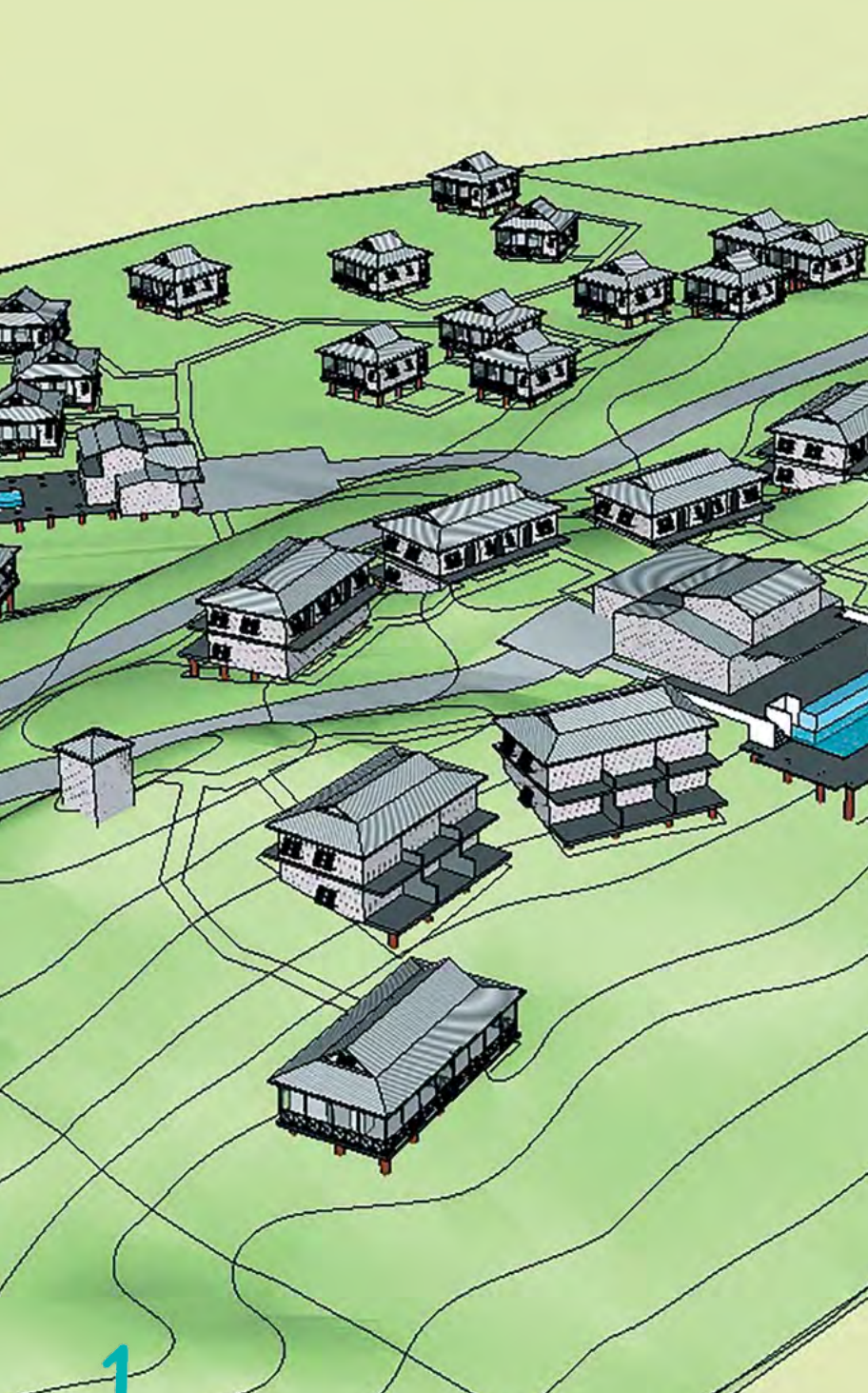
EDSA also used 3D modeling software on Mizner on the Green in Boca Raton, Florida to determine how much sun is provided on the amenity deck at various times of the day and throughout the year. “As their season is typically during the winter months it was very important to understand where and how much shade was cast by the towers to specific areas of the amenity deck,” states Propes. For other projects, software products such as Rhino (Rhinoceros) and computer-aided design (CAD)

application software, produce precise representations of curves and freeform surfaces to help clients visually understand the how and why behind design recommendations.

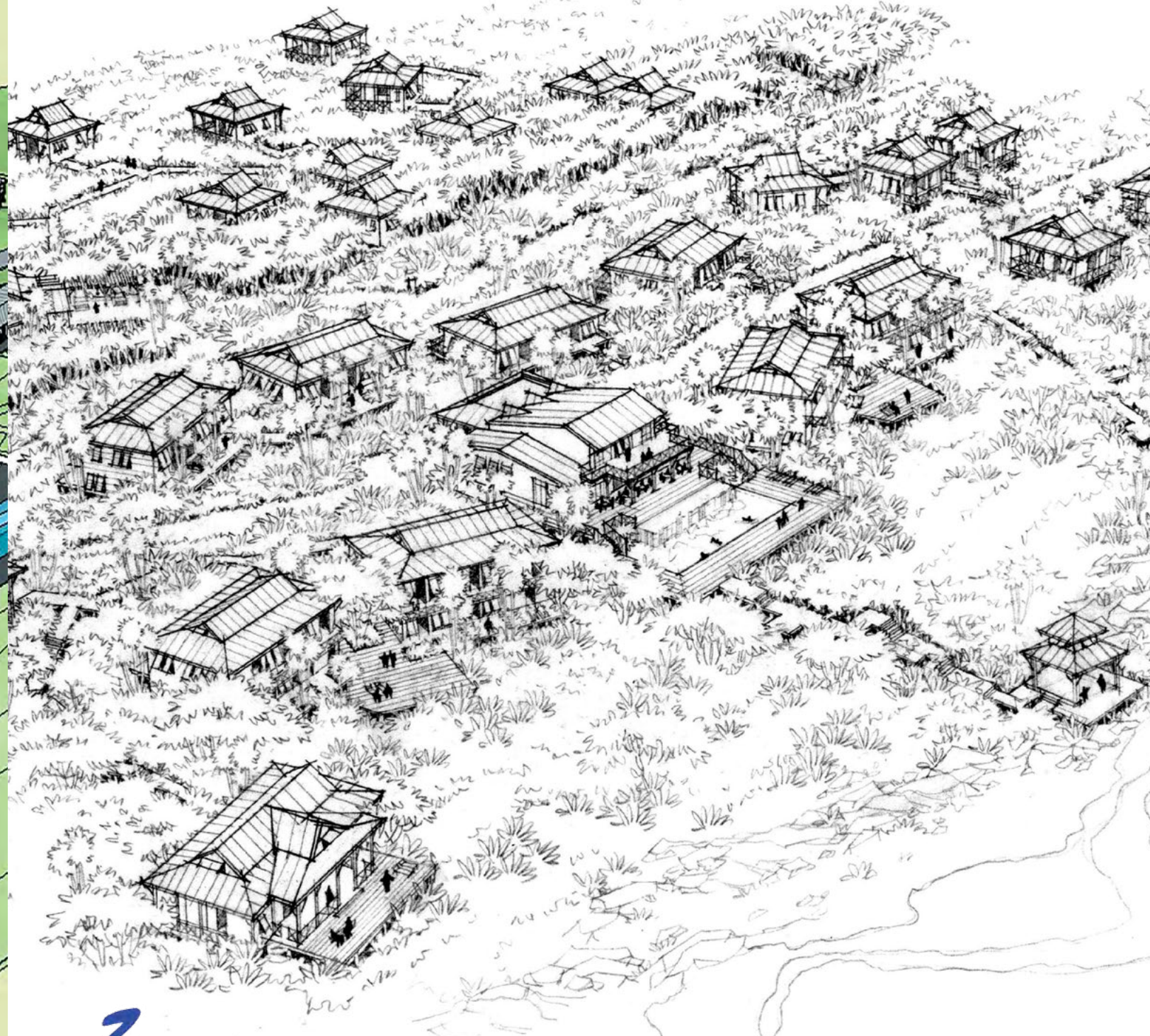
It’s an exciting time to be a designer, and a growing number of new touch-screen tools are making the work even more enjoyable. EDSA is using digital drawing tablets to improve efficiencies and add flexibility to the planning and design process. The intuitive Wacom Cintiq is designed to replicate the traditional sketching experience of working with conventional tools such as pens, markers, and paper while providing designers the power of advanced creative software applications. Bulemore explains, “What’s great is the functionality and freedom to quickly position and navigate plans, drawings, illustrations, and renderings with organic gestures right on the screen. As ideas form – road widths, setbacks, heights, color, landscape, and so on – a design can be drawn right before your eyes. Streetscapes, subdivision layouts, urban redevelopments – can all be sketched out in 3D and done with a CAD level of accuracy faster than trace ever was. We’re replicating the most natural drawing experience on a digital device – blending our unique hand graphics with digital media to create realistic designs for our clients.”



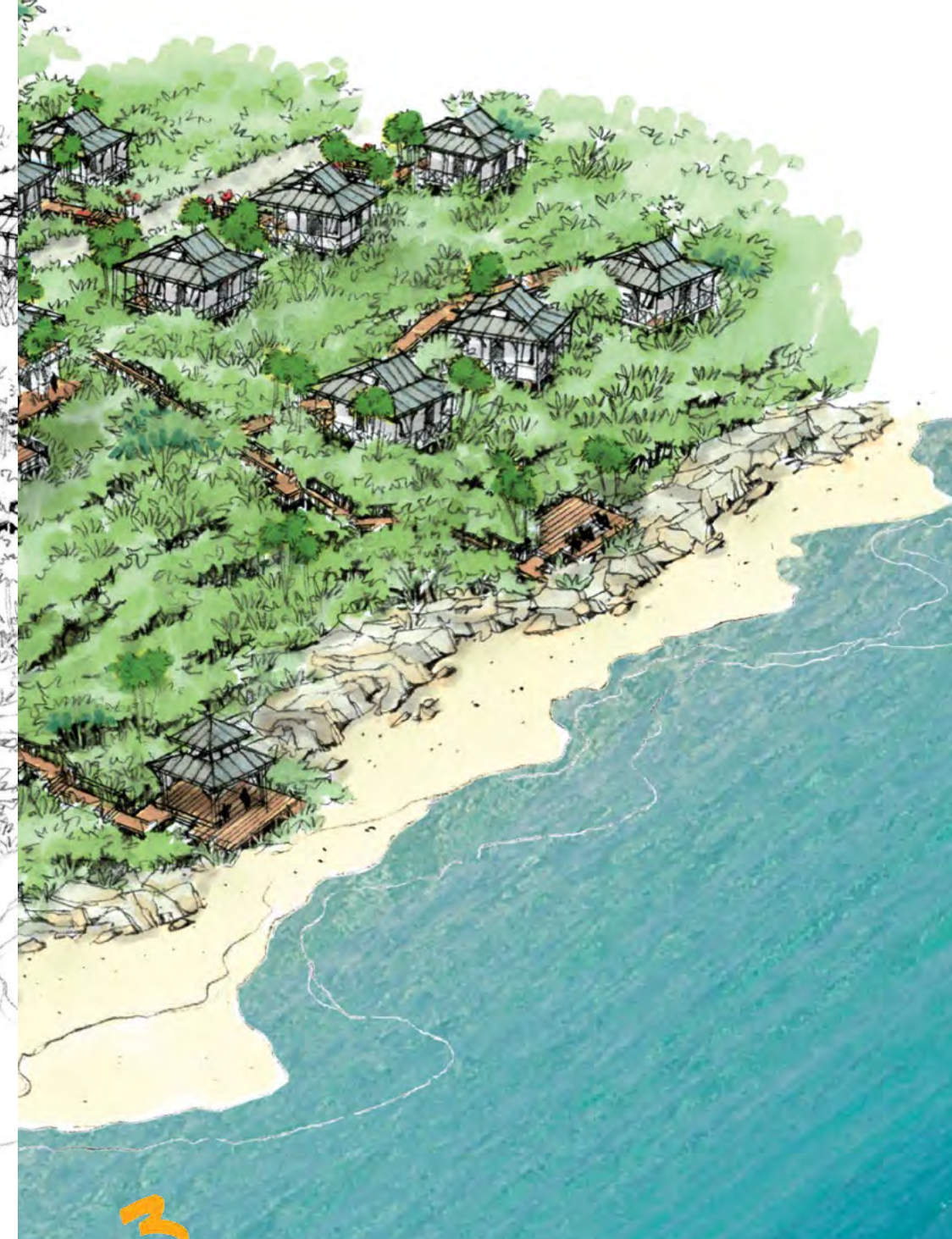
Perspective



1 SketchUp wireframe



2 hand sketch overlay



3 final illustrative

technology

IS AN ENABLER, NOT A REPLACEMENT,
FOR KNOWING THE CLIENT,
UNDERSTANDING THE PROJECT GOALS
AND BEING PREPARED. TECHNOLOGY IS
NECESSARY BUT WE CAN NEVER LOSE
SIGHT OF THE HUMAN SIDE OF DESIGN.

DANNY BULEMORE, EDSA ASSOCIATE

The Adobe Creative Suite is also valuable when there are revisions to one design component that affects the scale of entire development. Sometimes when the grading is changed in design, it has a domino effect and the other spaces must also be modified. Designers need to revise the plans so everything is correct and it needs to be done rapidly. “The response time to clients is critical,” says Cissel. “We can make small revisions using Photoshop in short order and get the revisions back to the client quickly. We are able to eliminate a few steps and improve the timing of our deliverables.” The increased use of this technology also aids in coordination with various team members around the world on revisions and amendments.

Technology is an enabler, not a replacement, for knowing the client, understanding the project goals and being prepared. “Technology is necessary but we can never lose sight of the human side of design,” says Bulemore. “It will not manage personal client relationships or replace the personality and client interaction of hand sketching an idea while discussing a project. When you rely solely on computer graphics, there is less room for imagination,” he says, emphasizing that there needs to be a balance and understanding of both technology and hand graphics to be a competent designer. “Ultimately, where we work, what our company culture is, and how we execute our designs are all factors that determine how we create and what is appropriate for a space. We will continue to use technology more and more, but we always want to trust our intuition, because our years of experience and collective design skills are unmatched.”

“Cultivating a strong artistic heritage is the best way we add value for clients and differentiate the firm,” explains Propes. “Design, after all, is an art form and the firm’s fine line drawings enable designers to humanize their visions. Just as computers will never replace people or serve as a substitute for personal interaction, — technology will not supersede hand graphics for the true designer in all of us. The best we can do is effectively delineate when each one will best serve the purpose in overall development and client communication.”



LIVING WITH WATER

Nearly 60% of the world's population lives and works within 100 kilometers of the coast, and three-quarters of the world's mega-metropolises are situated at the edge of the sea. The reason for this is simple – people are attracted to the lifestyle, climate, and natural beauty the water and coastline offers. As a result, these areas draw leisure seekers, sports and nature lovers, retirees, and urban dwellers in search of beautiful, organic surroundings. Add to that one of the most important trends in urban planning over the past 30 years – with cities like Owensboro, Kentucky; Fort Lauderdale, Florida; and Valletta, Malta rediscovering the value of their neglected waterfronts – bringing development, open space, and public access right to the water's edge. So it's no surprise that recent research suggests that coastal appeal will only strengthen over time.



**OUR ECOLOGICAL
FOOTPRINT SHOULD
BE AS SMALL AS
POSSIBLE WHILE
STILL ENHANCING
ECONOMIC VITALITY
AND FOSTERING
SOCIAL INTERACTIONS.**

-PAUL KISSINGER, EDSA PRINCIPAL

GUACALITO DE LA ISLA - COSTA ESMERALDA, NICARAGUA

DESIGN CHOICES

Growth is good for a variety of reasons. It generates jobs, creates economic prosperity, improves regional infrastructure, enhances educational opportunities, demands the clean-up of and reuse of defunct or underutilized coastlines, and increases tax revenues. The downside, of course, is that this growth also burdens local environments and raises the question of whether – or to what extent – these areas will retain their value in the decades to come. Ironically, as coastal populations grow, the natural features that attracted many to these regions in the first place can be lost or diminished without proper foresight and care. How can we balance consumer demand with environmental preservation of our coastal resources?

According to Katy Hallgren, EDSA Vice President, “As landscape architects we make environmentally responsible development a priority – addressing water quality, coastal eco-systems and habitats, rising sea levels, storm surge, and beach erosion, among other sensitive matters. It’s about educating people, being interpreters of current day circumstances and knowledge, along with envisioning the future world.” The search is on for how to best plan and manage coastal resources and develop new concepts that help create sustainable and resilient coastal systems.

If one single event had long-term consequences for the future of coastal development in the United States it was Hurricane Sandy, which hit the eastern seaboard in 2012. The devastating effects spurred recognition of the very real risks posed by climate change, calling into question the relationship between people, land, and the sea. While the impact of rising seawater influences where and whether or not to build, and points to major engineering solutions such as levees, locks, and the like – the reality is that not all responses need to be so big.

What is certain is that an array of approaches must be factored into the development and design of new and existing waterfronts and coastal recreation areas – addressing infrastructure and vulnerabilities, retrofitting existing communities, and managing retreat from the water’s edge where necessary. “We can resolve these conflicts by making responsible design choices that protect natural resources and create sustainable conditions while complying and sometimes exceeding the regulatory framework that’s in place to ensure projects are economically viable and enhance quality of life,” says Paul Kissinger, EDSA Principal.

The inevitable changes associated with coastal development clearly require a process that will translate these visions, expectations, and goals. “Ideally, our ecological footprint should be as small as possible while still enhancing economic vitality and fostering social interactions. It often times becomes a struggle of ethics between preservation and conservation. However, strategically it means treading lightly, using nature’s own systems for protection and advantage, as well as not disturbing natural coastal processes, such as dune systems, drainage, and the movement of sediments,” explains Kissinger.

“The best way to protect and conserve natural coastal systems is to allow them full freedom to be dynamic,” adds Michael Meyers, EDSA Vice President. Keeping the beach or coastal area in a natural state with open and public access minimizes disturbance of natural processes. “When the amenity of the waterfront is shared, the value of that waterfront is distributed throughout the broader community and its social, environmental, and cultural importance becomes greater,” explains Meyers. “For example, when you create a park that is a water storage amenity or improve a wetland system, you open up the opportunity for responsible development around it. By creating better public spaces and accessibility you raise the value of the surrounding land as well as the opportunity to educate the public about the importance of such areas. And, because the natural coastal processes are minimally disturbed, the coastal area will hold its value longer.”



BOCA BEACH CLUB, A WALDORF ASTORIA RESORT – BOCA RATON, FLORIDA

In 2011, EDSA was approached to help transform an existing coastal forest windbreak into an amenity feature for a new 170-hectare mixed-use/residential development on Hainan Island, China. EDSA was tasked with protecting as much of the existing forest vegetation as possible within the windbreak while also opening up key views. “We completed a series of programming studies to size, locate, and relate various public and private amenities including beach clubs, primary and secondary beach access points, a walking trail system, day camping areas, forest overlook and nature learning structures, community gathering spaces, plazas, and a new marina,” explains Kissinger. A kilometer-long hardscape connection spine was proposed between the community and forest area interface to help filter and direct visitors to various portal crossings connecting key amenity areas. The final concept plan included primarily public amenity areas featuring a central public beach club area. A private area was located at the north end of the project, anchoring the exclusive resort hotel complex.

The ultimate goal is to build in a manner that does away with the need for structural measures or beachfront replenishment – thus developing inland from the waterfront will reduce public cost and create value. Where development is appropriate, using higher densities designed to a human scale with environmental sensitivity and applying techniques such as permeable surfaces, narrow roads, native vegetation, recycled materials, and minimal irrigation will allow for even greater protection of natural areas.

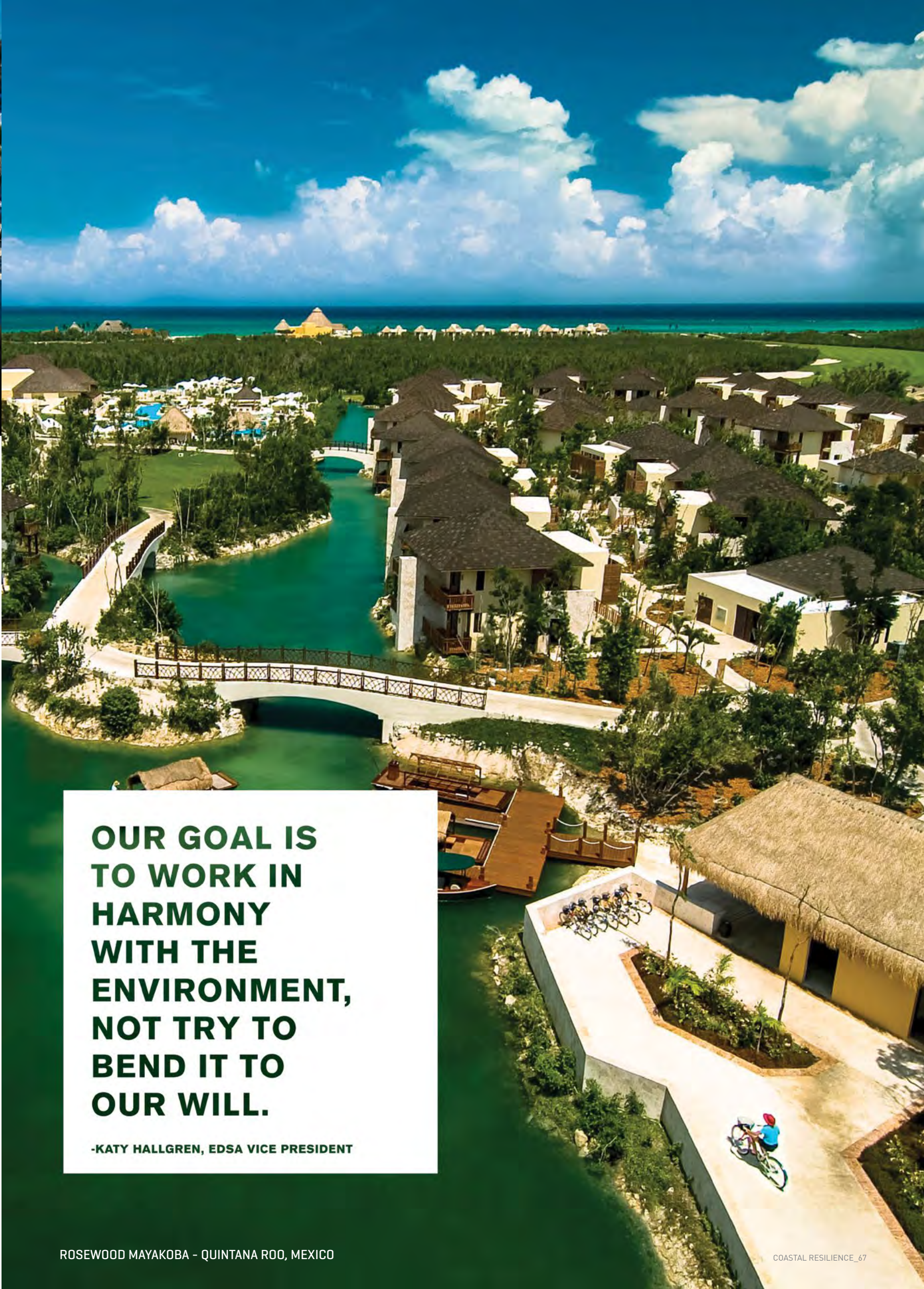
“At EDSA, we are continuing to build on our past experience, while also interjecting new research on a number of aspects that we believe will become increasingly important in driving future coastal development and redevelopment. Our goal is to work in harmony with the environment, not to try to bend it to our will – protecting natural habitats while preserving public open space and maintaining access for everyone. Natural patterns and systems can show us where building is appropriate and where it is not,” says Hallgren.

Each parcel of land is unique – a singular manifestation of the physical, biological, and cultural forces that act upon it. “We get to know and understand a place much as we would get to know and understand a person, by becoming familiar with it and, in the case of a place, by studying it and learning about its characteristics, history, and special qualities,” says Hallgren. Similarly, spatial dependency, which

involves an understanding that ‘everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things’ can also be applied to understanding the intrinsic or indispensable properties of a place. For instance, if a coastal dune is destroyed, the impact is not only limited to the built environment which is no longer protected from storm surges, erosion, and sea-level rise, but it also compromises the water balance, habitat, and resources for animals and plants, nearby coastal mangroves, coral reefs, and the ability for people to enjoy these coastal jewels. Analyzing, understanding, and then articulating the essence of a particular place is critical because it provides the underpinning for creating the vision of the future development, and the imagery and emotions that will draw people in and create the desire to share and buy into the associated lifestyle.

Recent market studies reveal that consumers today are becoming increasingly interested in protecting the environment and respecting local culture. They want developers and operators to care about the future of the planet, its organisms, and its people. “Perceptions are changing. We’re seeing a shift in resort development from top dollar of only ocean views to upcharges for views overlooking mangroves, wetlands and wildlife parks. These changing preferences and attitudes must inform our planning process so outcomes reflect the essence of the site and its surrounding areas, provide tangible benefits to local communities, offer visitors superior and authentic experiences, and provide long-term profitability to investors, developers, and operators,” suggests Meyers.

For Peninsula Maya, located at the intersection of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, EDSA provided master plan concepts for development that accomplished just that. “As one of the most ecologically important islands in the world, and home to a rich coastline that harbors an impressive array of fisheries, we addressed density, accessibility, connectivity, and the health of the environment,” says Meyers. The hotel and branded residences were planned in horizontal form, referencing beach dunes with open pathways. A combination of hard infrastructure and soft green public spaces were designed to mitigate chronic problems with flooding. Waterways meandering through mangroves provide a transportation network, and boardwalks and nature trails offer the opportunity to experience the island’s true sense of place. Habitats for animal life, recreation, and education help make climate resilience an unobtrusive part of the community creating value for people who live there.



**OUR GOAL IS
TO WORK IN
HARMONY
WITH THE
ENVIRONMENT,
NOT TRY TO
BEND IT TO
OUR WILL.**

-KATY HALLGREN, EDSA VICE PRESIDENT



THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE NATURAL COASTAL SYSTEMS IS TO ALLOW THEM FULL FREEDOM TO BE DYNAMIC.

-MIKE MEYERS, EDSA VICE PRESIDENT

PENINSULA MAYA – HOLBOX ISLAND, MEXICO



HARBORVIEW FLOATING WETLANDS – BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

For a 2.3 acre site located in the Baltimore Harbor, EDSA was tasked with improving water quality, providing environmental study and education opportunities, as well as creating a tourist destination by replacing proposed marina slips with floating wetlands. According to Hallgren, “Inspiration for the design was drawn from the juxtaposition of the rectilinear urban grid and the curvilinear forms of nature. Thus, the main feature is a shapely boardwalk bisecting blocks of floating wetlands as it connects to an outdoor living classroom platform. Along the curvilinear boardwalk are two demonstration pods with wetland education signage and underwater periscopes that allow visitors to observe how wetlands function.”

Traditionally, protection of coastal communities has relied heavily on erecting higher and higher barriers around the communities to keep the water out. “A more holistic approach would be to work with the context of the environmental conditions and emulate a more natural approach through a modern application of building technology and design that works in synergy and improves climate resiliency that is subtly woven into the solution that provides recreational areas for residents and anchors for development,” suggests Kissinger.

Change is constant and inevitable, and our planet is at the onset of changes related to temperature and sea-level rise. In fact, we can observe the effects already, including an increase in daily temperatures, change in rainfall patterns and extreme weather events, quantifiable increases in sea levels, changes in hydrology, and loss of biodiversity. Sea-level rise threatens low-lying shores, especially those in storm paths,

but even rugged coasts may experience significant changes in weather patterns. Resulting economic costs and damages to resorts, airports, local tourism, businesses, etc. in the Caribbean alone are estimated to exceed 20 billion dollars (US) per year. By contrast, proactive adaptation is far less expensive, with \$1 in adaptation capable of preventing \$4 in economic losses.

Hence, there is a need to create built coastal environments that can withstand higher seas and stronger storm surges through sensible choices in terms of siting, setbacks, and elevations. With regard to infrastructure such as energy, water, and wastewater treatment, there is a need to employ more decentralized, smaller and flexible systems that can be repeatedly adapted over time to the changing physical conditions of coastal environments. “Through research and education, we are documenting the performance of our design solutions that have resulted in tangible, positive impacts specifically related to land use, crime reduction, improved property value, utility usage, rainfall capture, and vegetation tolerance along with improved biodiversity and ecosystems health that will help us in doing a better job in designing coastal developments that are resilient and sustainable,” says Kissinger.

The development of coastal areas will continue to be desirable simply by virtue of location. While the challenges are daunting, EDSA will continue to apply intellectual, technological, and conceptual tools to explore and apply alternative, original, and innovative solutions. This is not only a good business choice but also imperative for the future of the planet.

1.
JILL MARTINEZ
Who doesn't love Vinny Barbarino and the Sweathogs from Welcome Back Kotter?



2.
KEYU YAN
I love to follow nature.



5.
BOB DUGAN
The dust is complimentary.
6.
MONICA GRIGORESCU
Stay inspired. Independence. Perspective.



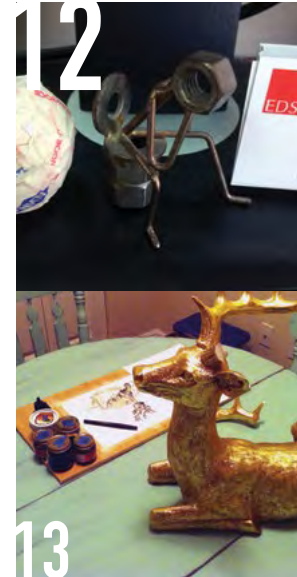
8.
MIHAELA ZAHARESCU
I love to travel and study various topics, in different languages. The camel is a gift from Egypt and it sings when pressed.



10.
JOHN ALLYN
A comical cross between a rooster, cat and dragon, I picked up this paper mache Alebrijes in Mexico on a charrette. A fantastical creature inspired by Oaxacan folk art, it's imaginative, irreverent and humorous, so this piece not only brings a smile to my face but it inspires me.



12.
COURTNEY MOORE
Much like 'The Thinker' by Rodin, 'The Stinker' sits at my desk to help me keep life in perspective. My drafting dot ball grows along with my professional experience.



13.
MICHAEL KULIK
Tiny Tim, my newly acquired golden ceramic deer, represents the unusual in the usual as a means of highlighting a unique design perspective and artistic merit often overlooked in nature. And, it's a gold friggin deer.



19.
AYANNA STEPHENS
Embellishments that hint at my island roots and love of community planning.



17.
ROBERT JACKSON
An old-school cell phone, that's been sitting on my desk at home for years, was my family's first. I used it quite a bit as a little kid—calling home to say we were on our way after hunting or fishing. That old phone did its job well!



20.
JOANNA IBARRA
A "Weeping Angel" plushy from Dr. Who, typically known as the nerd in most groups. This seems to be a pretty appropriate depiction of my life outside of work.



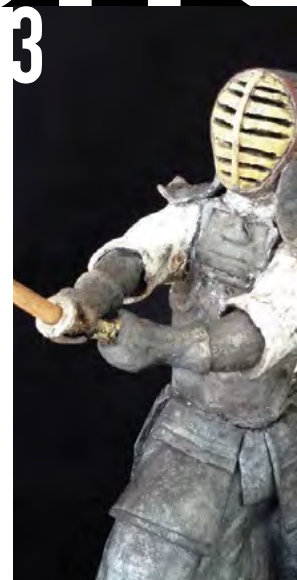
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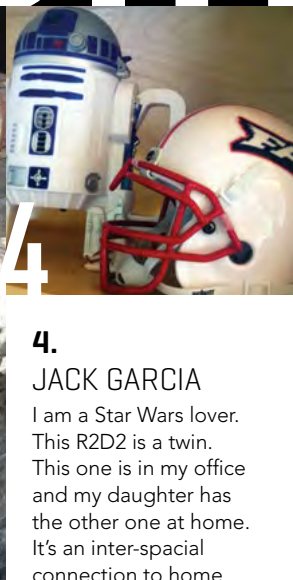
noun, informal

a photo of one's possessions arranged on a surface, such as a shelf

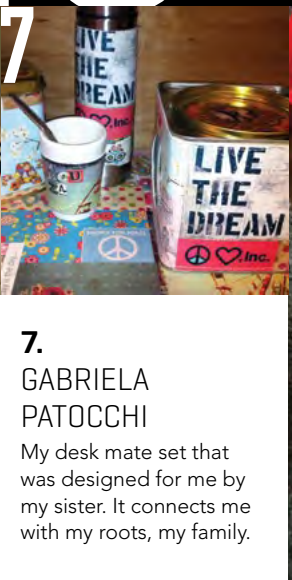
A modest depiction of the artistry, quirkiness, imagination and individualistic qualities that bring life to the EDSA family.



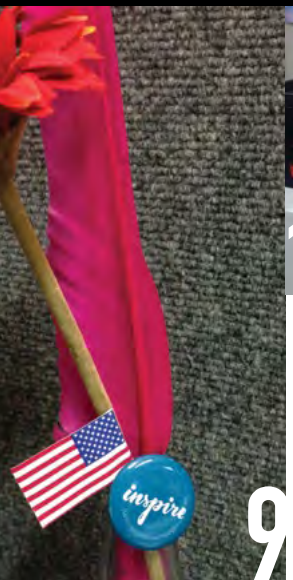
3.
HE HONG
I made this statue of myself after I passed my first Kendo promotional exam. Kendo is the way of sword. But for me, it represents a life long journey, and the philosophy of Zen – listening to my own voice, strengthening my concentration and becoming more patient.



4.
JACK GARCIA
I am a Star Wars lover. This R2D2 is a twin. This one is in my office and my daughter has the other one at home. It's an inter-spacial connection to home.



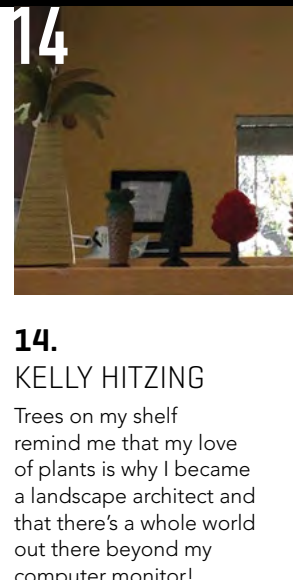
7.
GABRIELA PATOCCHI
My desk mate set that was designed for me by my sister. It connects me with my roots, my family.



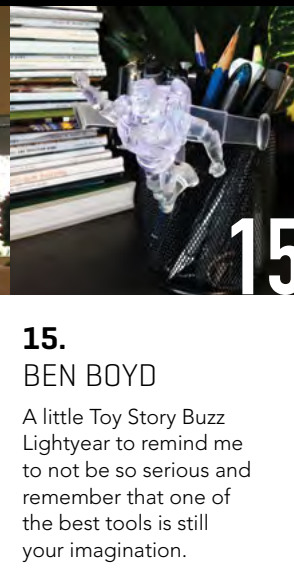
9.
ASTRID HOFFMANN
Working in a creative environment, finding inspiration in every object and circumstance, hoping that my work can be an inspiration to others as well.



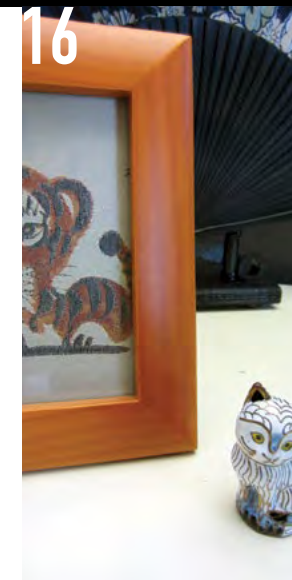
11.
GUO ZHENRONG
A horse runs extra fast when fed with Tabasco! It's important to add the right "ingredients" into one's life for optimal performance.



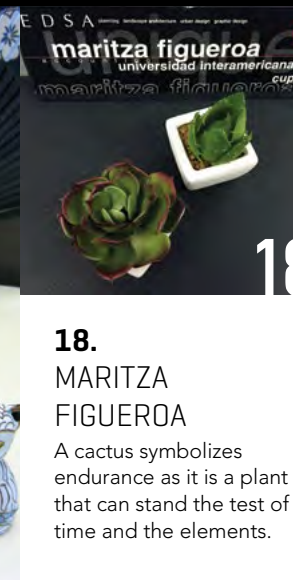
14.
KELLY HITZING
Trees on my shelf remind me that my love of plants is why I became a landscape architect and that there's a whole world out there beyond my computer monitor!



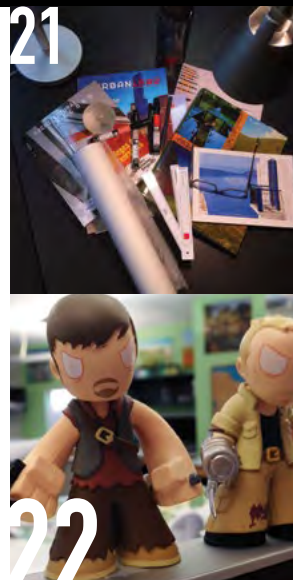
15.
BEN BOYD
A little Toy Story Buzz Lightyear to remind me to not be so serious and remember that one of the best tools is still your imagination.




16.
MASA TAGUCHI
The tiger drawing, zhijzn in Chinese, is a gift from an intern while the small cat was adopted from Joe Lalli's collection. I imagine she came from one of his world trips.



18.
MARITZA FIGUEROA
A cactus symbolizes endurance as it is a plant that can stand the test of time and the elements.



21.
JOSE JAGUAN
Inspiration from travels, architecture, interiors and art.
22.
KRISTEN LAWLOR
My walking dead character minis. I love that show and these guys just make me smile.



**THIS HAS BEEN A FANTASTIC YEAR
FOR EDSA, BOTH PROFESSIONALLY
AND CREATIVELY. WE LOOK
FORWARD TO THE MANY MILESTONES
AND ADVENTURES THAT LIE AHEAD.**

design
matters
A VISUAL GUIDE INTO THE LIFE OF EDSA



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