Seattle’s Olympic Sculpture Park Turns 5

Charles Anderson, FASLA, The Planning Center I DC&E

Visiting Professor USC
Learning Objectives

1) Learn about the garden designs of the evolving Olympic Sculpture Park.

2) Be introduced to the concept of "urbanature" and how it will affect the future of urbanism.

3) Understand how a native-plant park was designed and affects wildlife next to saltwater.

4) Learn brownfield remediation techniques, including storm water efficiencies and contaminated soils mitigation.
Olympic Sculpture Park

Before construction of the park, the site was a heavily contaminated petroleum transfer and distribution facility.

Benjamin Benschneider

Park designers added native plants, improved shoreline habitat, and reformed the topography into a z-shaped series of descending planes and bridges over the existing road and rail infrastructure.
Landscape Performance Benefits

Provides round-the-clock, free, open air public access to world-renown sculpture and Puget Sound for an average of over 425,000 annual visitors.

Increased biodiversity of epibenthic invertebrates, a staple food source for juvenile salmon, by 20% in the first 3 years of marine habitat monitoring.

Increased the number of observed juvenile fish by over 530-fold in 3 years. Populations rose from just over 500 in 2007 to over 265,600, within the first 3 years of shoreline monitoring along the park’s pocket beach and habitat bench.

Reduces water needs by nearly 95,000 gallons per week during the dry season by incorporating a 3.5-acre meadow with a drought tolerant plant palette instead of more conventional turf-scaped sculpture garden. Annual cost savings associated with this water conservation total nearly $7,900.

Saves an estimated $63,000 in annual maintenance and operating costs through a variety of volunteer-based stewardship and work party opportunities.

$41 million - Total project; $30 million - Landscape
Emo urbanism is the attitude (mojo)

Urbanature is the outcome
Could you see this 100 years ago?
It's a small world after all!
Think of Paradigm Shift as a change from one way of thinking to another. It's a revolution, a transformation, a sort of metamorphosis. It just does not happen, but rather it is driven by agents of change.