otak ozone november 2007
creating more sustainable communities on every level
ARCHITECTURE • ENGINEERING • LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE • PLANNING • ENVIRONMENTAL • SURVEY

Bioswales treat stormwater naturally and provide green space

PROJECTS

OTAK'S CIVIL ENGINEERING APPLIED TO LEED GOLD CONDOS

In Portland, OR, the 600,000 square foot, 24-story Meriwether Condominiums became the first LEED certified residential building in the South Waterfront redevelopment area. Otak, as the civil engineer, worked towards the LEED credits for erosion control, stormwater and site selection. To handle stormwater, Otak designed bioswales that treat stormwater naturally by capturing and holding rainwater that is slowly absorbed into the soil. A portion of the water then flows to an innovative underground infiltration system that was designed by Otak for the Central district of Portland. We worked with Walker Macy on the planting designs. The South Waterfront area will be the highest density neighborhood in Portland - a goal supported by public transit. Estimates are that South Waterfront's first phase will have 3,000 mostly high-rise residents plus 5,000 jobs on 38 acres. Co-developed by Gerding Edlen and Williams and Dame, the buildings achieve energy savings of more than 30 percent over the Oregon Energy Code and water savings 30 percent higher than conventional buildings. Suffused with natural light, the buildings incorporate rapidly renewable materials such as bamboo flooring and wheatboard door cores, low VOC paints and adhesives, and have expansive views of downtown Portland, the Willamette River, and Mt. Hood. Also in the South Waterfront area of Portland is the LEED-Platinum Center for Health and Healing at Oregon Health and Sciences University, on which Otak was also the civil engineering firm. To read an article in GreenSource about it click here.

Sustainable landscaping, even on a small scale, can illustrate how to design for improved water quality, slowing stormwater flow, and water conservation. Working with Frog On A Log Parks, Otak developed a sustainable landscape plan for Going Green at the Beach, a demonstration home in Stanwood, WA. The design features native plants, rainwater collection for irrigation, pervious and permeable surfaces, and reuse of salvaged materials. Because the home sits on the shore of Puget Sound, the sustainable landscape is particularly focused on eliminating erosion and pollution. The home will carry up to six different green home certifications. It will be open for tours from 1:00 to 5:00 pm, Saturdays & Sundays on the following weekends: Nov. 3-4 and Nov. 10-11. See website for directions.
The landscape plan shown here is available in pdf format; to have a copy emailed to you click here.

BAG IT!

Otak has provided canvas totes to employees, clients, and colleagues at recent American Public Works Association (APWA) Oregon and Washington Conferences. Barbara Blair, a project assistant in Otak's Lake Oswego office, took this photograph showing the usability of these reusable totes hoping that people will use them for grocery shopping to save on the use of plastic and paper bags!

PEOPLE

OTAK JOINS THE EXTREME MAKEOVER HOME

Out with the old-but not to the trash pile. Instead, the tear-down of the original home to make way for an Extreme Makeover was salvaged, recycled and mostly put to good use unless contaminated with toxic ingredients. One of the most popular shows on television, the Extreme Makeover Home Edition builds an entire home for a worthy family in less than a week-with all volunteer labor, at no cost to the family! When Otak's subconsultant Dave Bennink of Re-Use Consulting called to ask if we had any volunteers to help him take down the existing home, several of us jumped at the chance to help a family not too far from our Kirkland, WA, office. The show's secrecy is paramount, and so it requires stealth builders, suppliers, and contractors who have very little time to organize-in our case, two days before the tightly scheduled tear-down. Dave needed people quickly to conduct the salvage in the mere three hours allotted-and he got them. Volunteers from all over the state arrived to assist his team with the salvage and deconstruction of the existing home. With an office nearby in Kirkland, WA, the Otak team crossed town with shovels, pry-bars, ladders, and other tools to the home site, and worked quickly with about 40 other volunteers to make way for the Extreme Green Makeover. As a firm committed to sustainability, Otak takes great pride in contributing time to a family in its neighborhood to provide a healthier, safer, energy-efficient home. Look for the show to air in January 2008. And while waiting, you can check out the project's Extreme Green Makeover in Washington website.

Otak's volunteers from Kirkland and Seattle, WA, (left to right - Tyson Hounsel, Jeff Frye, Mandi Roberts, Robin Rogers, Dan Moore, and Veronica Sackett) helped with the deconstruction of the existing home and garage to make way for the Extreme Makeover!

WETLANDS OF THE ROCKIES

Linda Schuemaker (middle), a public involvement specialist in Otak's Carbondale office, works on the Jennie Adair Wetland Project in Aspen with other Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers to plant native rushes, grasses, and upland species in August.

GREEN CAR

Lisa Bosca, a graphics and CAD technician in our Lake Oswego office, captured a "green" car at our Lake Oswego, OR, office.

WHAT MAKES IT GREEN?

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

By Leslie McClain, Otak Planner in Lake Oswego, OR

On October 10th a group of engineers, planners, and landscape architects from Otak's Bend, Seattle, and Lake Oswego offices toured what could be considered Oregon's most sustainable residential community, Pringle Creek in Salem, OR. One of Pringle Creek's developers, Don Myers, gave us a tour and introduced us to the development's many sustainable features, including Oregon's first LEED-Homes Platinum home and the nation's largest residential pervious pavement system. Not only that, but at least 28 of the homes built will be equipped with photovoltaic and solar hot water panels, 90 percent of all rainwater that falls onsite infiltrates back into the aquifer, all lumber used in construction must be 100 percent FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified, 85 percent of the existing trees were preserved along with 35 percent of the open space, and a 400 percent efficient onsite ground-source geothermal energy source will heat and cool all the commercial buildings and up to 70 homes.

The many eco-features of Pringle Creek.

In addition to sustainability, community is a primary theme for Pringle Creek. Community gardens, a greenhouse, a village center with mixed-use and retail, a bio-diesel co-op fueling station, a car share and bicycle share program, and a sustainable living center educational facility are just a few of the community amenities at Pringle Creek. The neighborhood also includes a wide variety of housing types including cottages, tall houses, row homes, and live-work lofts. By including smaller home sizes and rentable accessory dwellings, Pringle Creek hopes to include lower income and medium income people in the community.

Our coalition of staff came to Pringle Creek with the desire to learn more about building green streets and to gain practical knowledge about the costs and benefits of adopting these practices into some of our own designs for our existing clients. Pringle Creek is still in its early stages of life-only a handful of lots have been sold; however, Don Myers spoke with confidence that Pringle Creek will be successful. The market is shifting and home owners are looking for quality products in quality neighborhoods. They want energy efficient, sustainably-built homes and a sense of community-all of which Pringle Creek provides. I have to admit, if I lived in Salem, I would want a home in Pringle Creek.

The Urban Land Institute, the National Association of Home Builders and Green + Solar Magazine have all acknowledged Pringle Creek as the neighborhood development that will set the bar for all future sustainable neighborhoods. Even if developers could emulate only half of what Pringle Creek has achieved, it would benefit the community as a whole.

As Pringle Creek continues to build out, I will continue to watch Don Myers and his development team. They committed to their goals and created a unique and sustainable community. Now let's see if they can make some money and show the housing market and the country that sustainable can also be profitable.

To learn more about Pringle Creek and its sustainable features, please visit the website or email Don Myers.

AWARDS

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Our architecture team won the 2007 AIA/IIDA Portland 'People's Choice' Design Award for the design of the five-star Al Bateen Wharf Hotel + Residences in the United Arab Emirates. While sustainable buildings are a challenge in an extreme climate such as in the UAE, Otak's design attempts to provide some mitigation; simple volumes are wrapped with a fluid, transparent veil-like screen that helps diffuse natural lighting, at the same time promoting energy savings by passive cooling, and shielding from intense summer sun. Presentation boards were on display on the Rotunda Level of Pioneer Place in Portland, OR, where the public voted for the project they liked the best. Otak's project team includes Dennis Haden, Robert McClendon, Tom Ventura, Judd Janes, and Alex Gonzales.

Sun screens wrap the Al Bateen Wharf Hotel in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

RESOURCES

TEACH GREEN

A database of green ideas, statistics, lesson plans, field trips and projects is designed to help kids learn about sustainability-but anyone can use it by clicking here.

CARBON CALCULATOR

Jenn Isfan in Otak's Lake Oswego, OR, marketing department found a website that allows anyone to calculate their carbon footprint here.

SUSTAINABILITY GAME
Katie Kersten, in our marketing department, found the "what would the world look like if everyone lived like me" game, an online foray into consumer habits from American Public Media that helps you find out if you're living a sustainable life. To play the online game click here.

CANDIDATES VIEWS
On The Issues a non-partisan, non-profit website provides up-to-date information on presidential candidates' views on many issues, including the environment. To view click here.

NEWS

WHAT'S NEWSWORTHY @ OTAK

HOLLYWOOD GOING GREEN?
The California Film Commission is taking steps to educate the film industry about reducing its environmental impact by creating an online Green Resource Guide. Perhaps not a moment too soon, as a two-year study by the University of California at Los Angeles found that the entertainment industry is second only to the oil industry as a top industrial polluter in Southern California.

Some studios are using biodiesel in their generators, converting sets to solar energy, and buying carbon credits, but some critics are reportedly not satisfied: Ed Begley Jr., one of the "green" personalities in Hollywood says, "If you're going to drive around in a big ol' Hummer and then buy carbon offsets to mitigate that, that's like getting drunk on the weekends and throwing some money through the window of an AA meeting and thinking you're doing something." Read an article about Hollywood's greening on SaukValley.com.

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FROM THE EDITOR

A LIFETIME OF SUSTAINABILITY IS REWARDED
Sustainability trailblazer David Johnston was recently given the seventh annual international SAM/SPG Sustainability Pioneer Award that acknowledges personal excellence in implementing the principles of sustainability. An international selection committee of sustainability experts chose Johnston for his many years as a successful sustainable building expert. Johnston's sustainable building consultancy, What's Working Inc., provides

socially and ecologically responsible guidance to businesses, agencies, and communities around the world, and his publications have transformed the way people think in the U.S.


David Johnston

For 20 years, Johnston has been a leading thinker behind the sustainable building movement. His approach to sustainable building has been embraced by municipalities, homeowners, building professionals, and sustainability advocates nationwide. In the mid-1990s he instigated the market transformation approach that has since been adopted by most major sustainable building programs.

Johnston established the first private sector residential sustainable building program in Denver through the local home builder's association-forming the basis for many other home builder programs in the U.S. Today, the Denver program is the largest in the country and was the catalyst for the National Association of Home Builders to develop national sustainable building guidelines. He is the founding designer and consultant to the Alameda County Waste Management Authority program and California's Build It Green program. He is the author of Green Remodeling: Changing the World One Room at a Time and Building Green in a Black and White World.

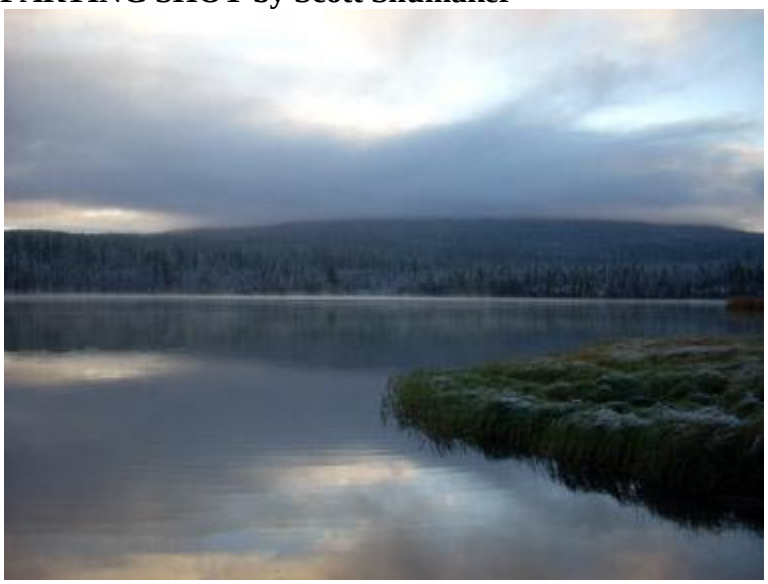
His programs have exposed thousands to sustainability - the end result of Johnston's work over the years is millions of tons of carbon saved, significant energy reduction over local building codes, millions of gallons of water conserved, hundreds of thousands of trees saved, and preservation of precious old growth forests. And now sustainability is really taking off so we might imagine the next 20 years will conserve even more.

As John Kennedy once said, "One person can make a difference and every person should try." Congratulations to David Johnston for making a difference!

Robin Rogers

Otak is a member of:

PARTING SHOT by Scott Shumaker



Little Lava Lake in Central Oregon near Mt. Bachelor