

About Sasaki

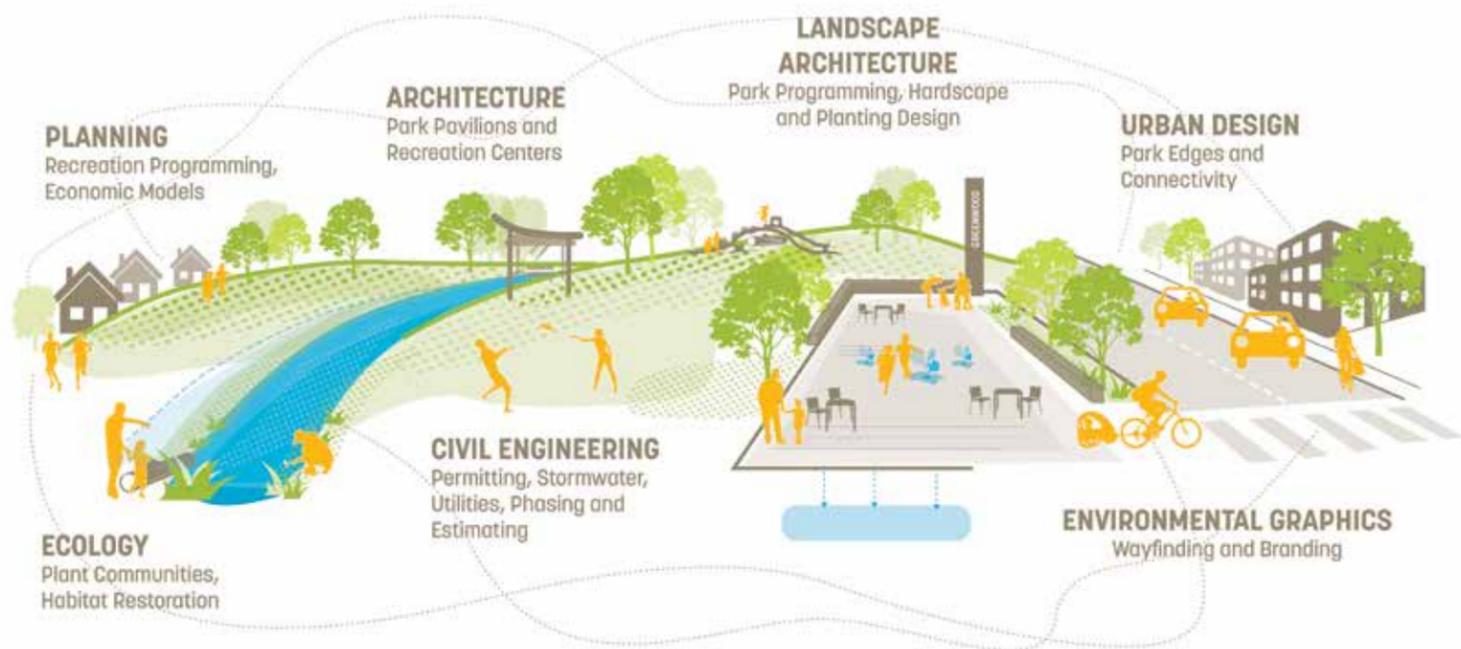
Sasaki believes in an inclusive culture that powers human potential. We build our ecosystem on parity, respect, accountability, candor, and trust to reflect our commitment to our people and their contributions.

Since our founding in 1953, our willingness and ability to embrace this diversity has been one of the pillars of our success since this openness enriches our working life as well as what we produce.

Today, we are focused on improving the quality of life through the built environment, with particular expertise in the planning, design, and implementation of projects around the world. The core tenets of our work are partnerships with our clients toward shared outcomes, meaningful and memorable community engagement, data-driven analysis, transformation through visionary planning and design, and well-defined implementation strategies to see projects realized.



Our Parks Practice



Our Parks Practice is composed of a core team of interdisciplinary collaborators who bring national expertise in park system planning, park design, resilient systems, recreation planning and design, trails and greenways, ecology, and graphic design.

Our team understands the process of balancing big vision with guiding projects from planning to implementation. Our extensive portfolio of built work provides us with invaluable knowledge that we can apply during the planning and feasibility phase of a project—we understand the nuances of cost estimation, phasing, and funding.

Even at a master planning level, we pay crucial attention to fine details to ensure our projects are both respectful of their environment and contribute to the transformation of place. Our experience crafting park and recreation system master plans for communities like Denver, CO, Newport, RI, Howard County, MD and others provides unique insights into recreational trends and the role of parks within the larger open space system of Chattanooga.



The Sasaki Foundation

The Sasaki Foundation is committed to empowering communities by tackling the issue of inequity in design. The Foundation works with communities, civic leaders, practitioners, educators, and others to support research and programs that diversify the voices involved in shaping the built environment.

The Sasaki Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation was founded in 2000. The Sasaki Foundation fosters equity and inclusivity by engaging diverse groups and individuals in the design of the environment. We sponsor research and programs that empower communities and strengthen education in design. At the intersection of research, practice, and community, the Sasaki Foundation is committed to advancing the value of design, inviting diverse partners to co-create change.

The Sasaki Foundation resides in the Incubator at Sasaki, located on the Sasaki campus just outside of Boston in Watertown, Massachusetts. For more information on The Sasaki Foundation, please visit: <https://www.sasakifoundation.org/>.



The Incubator at Sasaki

The Incubator at Sasaki is a flexible research studio and shared work space that connects external collaborating researchers and innovators with the unparalleled resources of our firm's design studios. As another vehicle for inclusion of diverse perspectives, it serves as a forum for critical debate about topics that bridge the design community and the world at large.

Sasaki's cross-disciplinary practice has a long history of tackling complex campus planning and urban design challenges from a global perspective. The firm has thrived on the leading edge of change for decades by maintaining academic partnerships, encouraging entrepreneurialism, sponsoring in-house research, and creating cutting-edge technologies. By bridging between academic research and practice, the Incubator serves as a creative hub for internal and external researchers who are solving complex problems of resiliency, mobility, and social equity in the design of the built environment.

Design Approach



1

Implementation Through
Public and Private
Partnerships



2

Resilient Park
Excellence



3

Data-Driven Design



4

Public and Stakeholder
Engagement



5

Innovative Design for
Children and Families



6

Fostering Identity
Through Branding and
Signage

OUR VALUES

Implementation Through Public and Private Partnerships

Sasaki has a long history working with conservancies, municipalities, non-profits and developers to create great parks and public spaces. We work with our clients to transform a community or institution's vision into a master plan and a built park that serves as a legacy for future generations. In recent years we have witnessed the trend of public private partnerships and we are at the forefront of that movement.

Many of the projects we work on are privately funded, in whole or in part, and either continue to be privately operated and maintained or seek public-private partnerships. Our goal is to always create parks that have long-term financial sustainability. We work closely with clients and specialized consultants to help set up a park's governance, operational budget, and long-term economic feasibility.



◀ **SMALE RIVERFRONT PARK**

Built over 5 phases, the 32-acre Smale Riverfront Park has leveraged a mixture of municipal, federal and private dollars. A separate park foundation collaborated with the public park board to fund-raise for the capital improvements, and to coordinate donor naming rights for various aspects of the park program. Sasaki worked closely with the board to provide materials to entice private donations.



▲ **SARASOTA BAYFRONT**

The Sarasota Bayfront Planning Organization (SBPO), Inc. is nine-person board organized as a 501(c)(3) and is leading the master plan for a City of Sarasota-owned 42-acre site on the Bayfront of Sarasota, Florida. The funding of the SBPO is provided 100% by the private sector, with its \$2 million budget raised: 1/3 by local foundations and 2/3 by individuals and organizations. Sasaki's final Master Plan proposed the property to remain in City ownership, with management and development of the site by a soon-to-be established land conservancy, much like other vibrant US communities. Now beginning the implementation phase, Sasaki is assisting the SBPO in fundraising and grant-writing to garner local, County, State, Federal and philanthropic dollars.



◀ **BONNET SPRINGS PARK**

To realize the vision of Bonnet Springs Park, a group of Lakeland, FL enthusiasts created a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), Windsong Park Inc., charged with taking the site into design and planning for its future operations and management. To date the master plan and subsequent design has been completely privately funded by Lakeland philanthropy. Funding for the construction of the Park will include local, State, Federal and private dollars, and Sasaki is working closely with Windsong to procure donations and grants.

▶ **UNION POINT**

Union Point is the largest redevelopment in New England, transforming over 800 acres of a former Naval air station into a Smart City. Sasaki worked with private developer LStar on the urban design and has implemented a total of 1,000 acres of privately-funded and privately maintained open space through the project.



OUR VALUES

Resilient Park Excellence

Our team has proven experience designing—and implementing—resilient waterfront parks around the country. Our work has been recognized by the APA, Army Corps, and ASLA for resilient strategies and design quality. Our implemented project designs have successfully withstood flooding as planned. Our design philosophy leverages resilient design as multi-benefit infrastructure—where flood protection also advances economic opportunity, recreation, equity, access, and healthier ecosystems.

IMPLEMENTED RESILIENT WATERFRONT PARKS:

- ▶ Cedar Rapids Riverfront*
- ▶ Wilkes-Barre River Commons*
- ▶ Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago, IL*
- ▶ Smale Riverfront Park (Cincinnati)*
- ▶ Tom Hanafan River’s Edge Park (Council Bluffs)*
- ▶ Alabama’s Gulf State Park (completed 2018)

**Have flooded since being completed. Resilient design strategies functioned as intended and open spaces quickly reopened.*

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"UNCHOKE THE THROAT" DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR THE CHARLES RIVER



▼ PARKS THAT CAN FLOOD

From hard to soft, our designs respond to their context and identify ways to integrate green space even in areas with tight regulatory constraints. In Chicago, Sasaki designed floating wetlands and underwater fish habitat that did not conflict with shipping channel regulations. In **Smale Riverfront Park**, which sits along the banks of the Ohio River in downtown Cincinnati, Sasaki designed key features to be disconnected and removed easily (including removable restroom pods and specimen roses in the rose garden that could be evacuated in a flood). Everything else was made of durable materials that could withstand high velocity water and be cleaned easily. In the spring of 2018 the park experienced a record flood: all strategies worked as planned, and the park reopened within a week.



SMALE RIVERFRONT PARK, DURING AND AFTER RECORD FLOODING IN 2018 (CINCINNATI, OH)

▶ MULTI-BENEFIT RESILIENT FEATURES

Through a city-wide planning process led by Sasaki in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the community identified a new riverfront event space as a top reinvestment priority. Sasaki designed a new riverfront amphitheater, opened in 2013, as a multi-benefit destination layering flood protection, regional open space amenity, and ecological restoration in one project.

▶ DESIGN THE EDGE

Perched on the edge of the Port of Los Angeles, the **Wilmington Waterfront Promenade** will be the Wilmington community’s “window on the water”, expanding the community open space network first implemented by Sasaki in 2011. What was once the static seawall edge of a working port will be transformed into a dynamic waterfront experience that invites people of all ages to interact with the water—walking down to touch it, hanging over it in hammocks or hopping into a boat to navigate over it. The entire park is designed to withstand rising sea levels in Los Angeles.

◀ EXPAND ACCESS

Sasaki has been working with the Charles River Conservancy and Walk Boston on the **Unchoke the Throat** initiative to advocate for expanded pedestrian access as part of the I-90 reconstruction project along the narrowest part of the Charles River. Sasaki’s design shows options for widening the open space by adding raised boardwalks or carefully adding fill to select places along the Charles River trail.



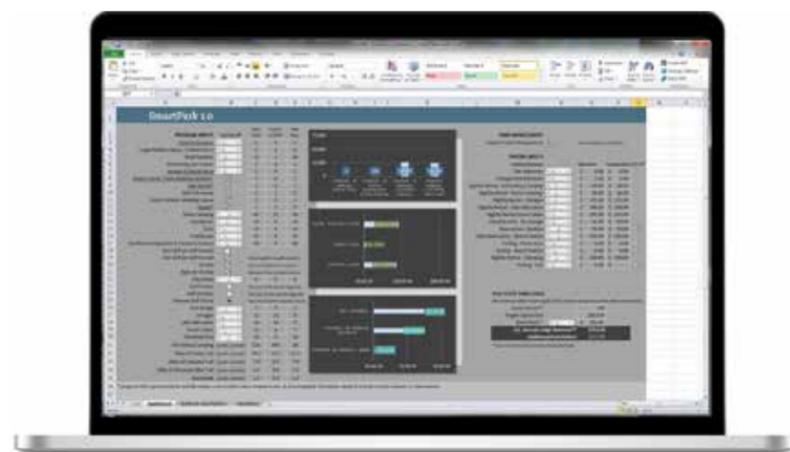
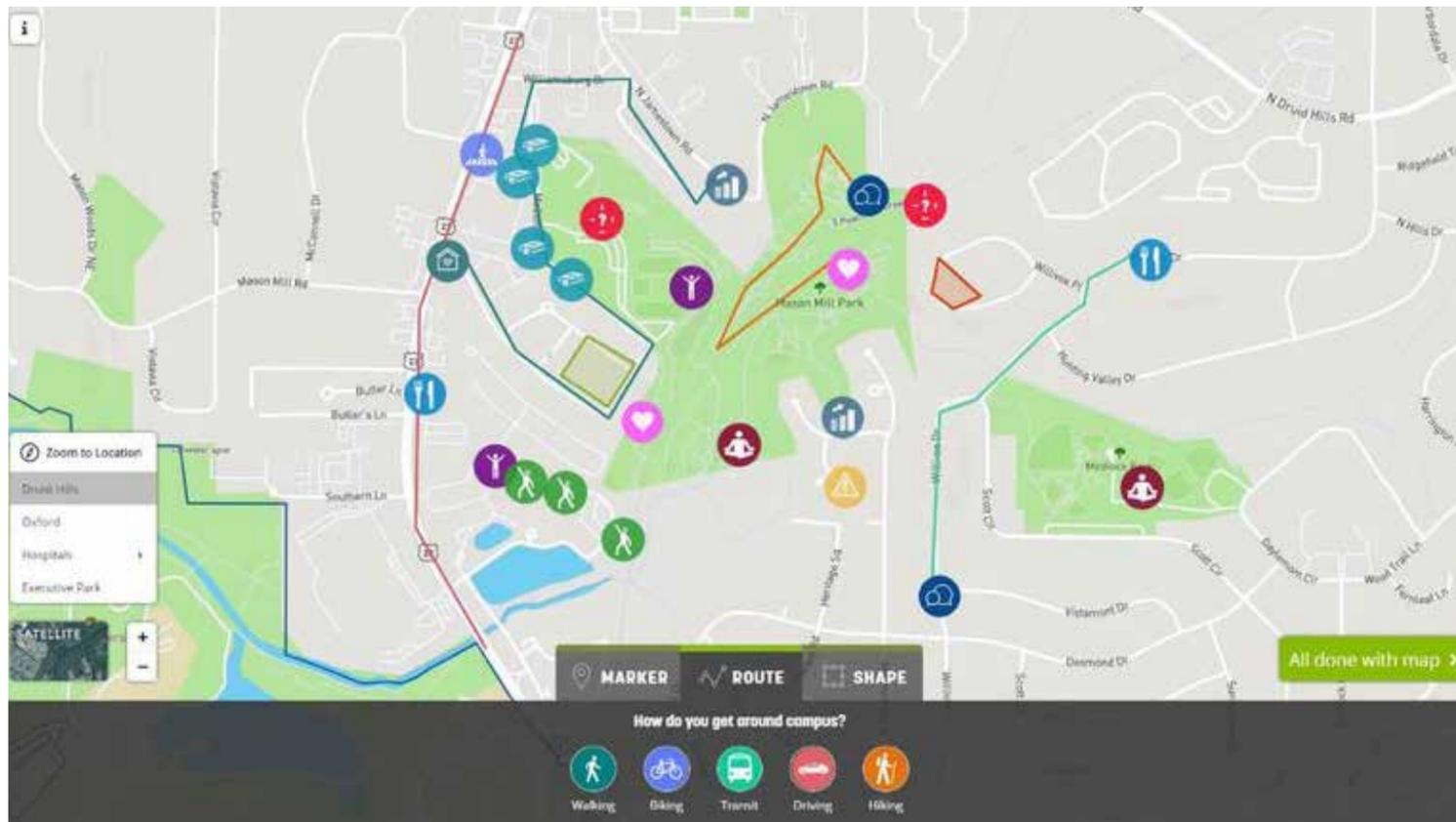
OUR VALUES

Data-Driven Design

Sasaki Strategies, our in-house team of designers, software developers, and analysts, is instrumental in helping us get the most out of data/technology with custom tools, data visualizations, and analysis.

We turn that data into sophisticated analytical mapping in order to inform and support decision making. We also have capacity to develop custom tools that are tailored to the community to support our engagement efforts.

On these pages, we feature some of our custom tools that have helped us develop insights for stronger, and more creative solutions.



STORYTELLING SITES

Technology and data can be powerful tools for amplifying the impact and value of good design and making decisions with a fuller picture of all the variables in play. Storytelling sites help users explore and understand the narratives behind data-driven designs and decisions through interactive and accessible means.

SMARTPARK

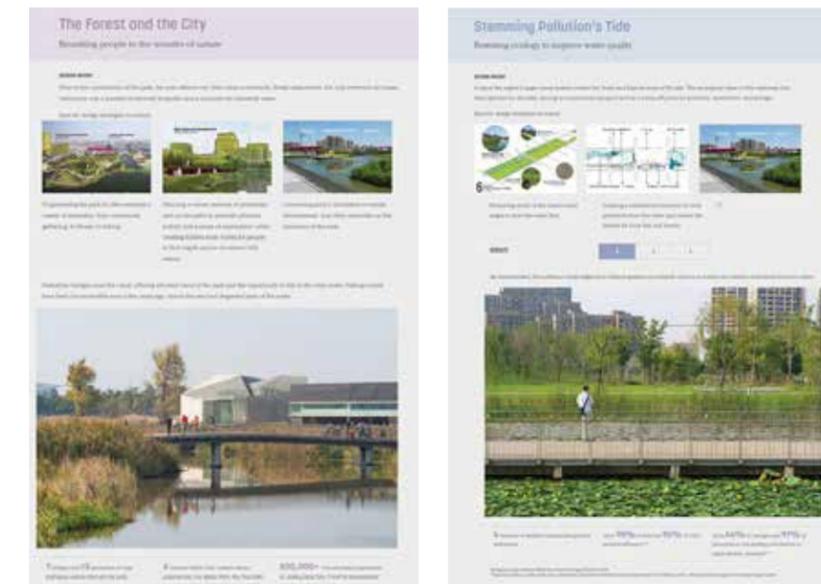
SmartPark is a quantitative analysis tool that allows our team to test the impacts of different programming and land use decisions on capital and operational costs and visitor numbers. This tool has helped us on projects such as Gulf State Park, to develop strategies—from revenue generation to operational management adjustments—to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the park.

COMAP

Designing for people is central to any project, and understanding how people experience place is core to our design process. CoMap is an interactive mapping tool that helps reveal patterns in how people engage with places. Stakeholders are able to voice their opinions on the specific details of their community: what they like, what makes it unique, and what they think could be improved. The result is a detailed snapshot of the local experience: frequently and rarely used spaces, the linkages between various destinations, and public perception of the place as a whole.



We designed and built the landscape for a major Shanghai park to improve the area's ecological health.
 Three years later, how is the landscape functioning?



OUR VALUES

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement is core to Sasaki's approach to design. Our engagement experience spans project types including work with cities, campuses, and private developers. We craft an engagement strategy based on the specific needs of each project that will allow us to listen, inform, and create consensus.

Intentionally tugging at the extremes, the strategies on the following pages represent outreach options that are simultaneously centralized and mobilized; traditional and innovative; predictable and spontaneous; analog and digital; broadcast and targeted; formal and informal. We seek inspiration from the cities and clients with whom we work and are eager to innovate around engagement.

We see the goals of engagement on every effort being: building awareness and excitement, gathering meaningful input to create a shared vision, and building local capacity to broaden the coalition for implementation.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. Focus on the hard-to-reach & make it easy to engage
2. Network approach: Connect with key local leaders and ask them to help engage their networks
3. Honest, inclusive process: be good listeners & ask meaningful questions
4. Make it fun!



Information Sharing

Information sharing strategies are perfect for getting all members of a community—residents, workers, students, and others—excited about planning ideas. These opportunities help to generate support for key concepts and encourage public feedback. Potential strategies could include Community Open Houses as well as Online and Social Media Engagement.



Focused Input Gathering

In situations where more targeted feedback is required, focused input gathering sessions are more appropriate. These strategies are designed to address smaller groups and focus on meeting stakeholders "where they are" –in spaces where they have easy access and feel comfortable expressing their opinions. These sessions provide more detailed responses to particular topics and are often aimed at specific stakeholder groups with unique perspectives, experiences, or knowledge. Potential engagement methods include Focus Groups / Interviews, and Tactical Engagement strategies.



COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE,
GREENWOOD COMMUNITY PARK, BATON ROUGE



PARTICIPATING IN A COMMUNITY EVENT,
HIGH LINE CANAL VISION PLAN, DENVER



SUMMER CAMP ACTIVITY,
BRIDGEPORT PARKS MASTER PLAN

Outreach Tactics

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES

Target Audience: General Public

Format: Major Public Meetings (with multiple sessions for each). Open house, drop-in format with interactive stations

At certain key milestones, big events are appropriate to bring a project's big-tent constituency under one roof. Tactical urbanism interventions, such as prototyping new bike lanes, are incorporated into these events to boost participation and extend the longevity of the engagement.

EXISTING EVENTS

Target Audience: Youth and families, people of color, young professionals, and other under-represented populations or broader metro area residents

Format: Coordinated with existing events or program (neighborhood meetings, church, family and sporting events, festivals)

This tactic includes attending existing events to broaden awareness and input. At these events, we can conduct pop-up meetings or host an informational booth. We can also provide a "Meeting in a Box" kit to support additional outreach.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Target Audience: General Public

Format: Survey or other digital input opportunity in parallel with each public meeting series

At each key engagement milestone, we often utilize online channels in parallel with the community-wide open houses, opening up the conversation to a broader range of participants. At Sasaki, we create our own highly-graphic, customized online tools—such as CoMap, MyPark, and CrowdGauge—that crowd-source information from the public, allowing participants to map and evaluate their experiences and place values on priorities.

FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS

Target Audience: City officials, other public agencies, downtown businesses, residents, advocacy groups, developers, and other specific stakeholder groups

Format: Invited meetings

The goal of these invited, small group meetings is to conduct in-depth conversations with domain-specific experts. These interviews provide more detailed information and helps grow a broader coalition for implementation.

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEB PRESENCE

Target Audience: Youth, Millennials, Broader Community

We can provide social media content and project updates for the city to post on the project website and existing social media channels. Social media targeting allows us to get content in front of particular demographic segments (such as millennials) and even particular geographic areas.

STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Target Audience: Broad mix of representatives representing range of issues and organizations

Format: Invited Advisory Committee; meetings at each outreach milestone

We often work in places where there is already a rich network of institutions, community groups, and other civic networks. Stakeholder Committees bring together diverse representatives to provide input into the process and hear from one another. These groups are instrumental in connecting us with hard-to-reach populations and key influencers among them.

OUR VALUES

Innovative Design for Children and Families

We understand the unique needs and interests of a city's youngest residents, and excel at designing welcoming, engaging and fun landscapes that keep children and their families coming again and again. Our playscapes research initiative is helping to shape a national conversation on how the outdoor landscapes can support the development of urban children and youth. We implement research-based design and follow up by conducting post-occupancy evaluations to better understand how our playscapes function.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION:

- ▶ Sasaki's article on the post-occupancy evaluation of our adventure playscapes at Smale Riverfront Park in Cincinnati, Ohio has been reprinted by NRPA, Design Museum Foundation, and widely quoted in architectural press.
- ▶ Sasaki collaborated with the Design Museum Foundation on the exhibition Extraordinary Playscapes, which has recently returned to Boston after two years traveling coast to coast.
- ▶ In 2016 Sasaki's internship program on play research and enlivening the play opportunities along the Charles River, and coincided with an exhibition in our office gallery space on the developmental benefits of free play for children.



CONTEXTUAL DESIGN

Sasaki's playscapes are never a kit of standard parts. We believe that immersive play and learning experiences go hand-in-hand and that they should reflect the unique character of each place. In Cincinnati, where the playscape sits within the floodplain of the Ohio River, this climber was inspired by the log jams that build up on the shore during and after flood events.

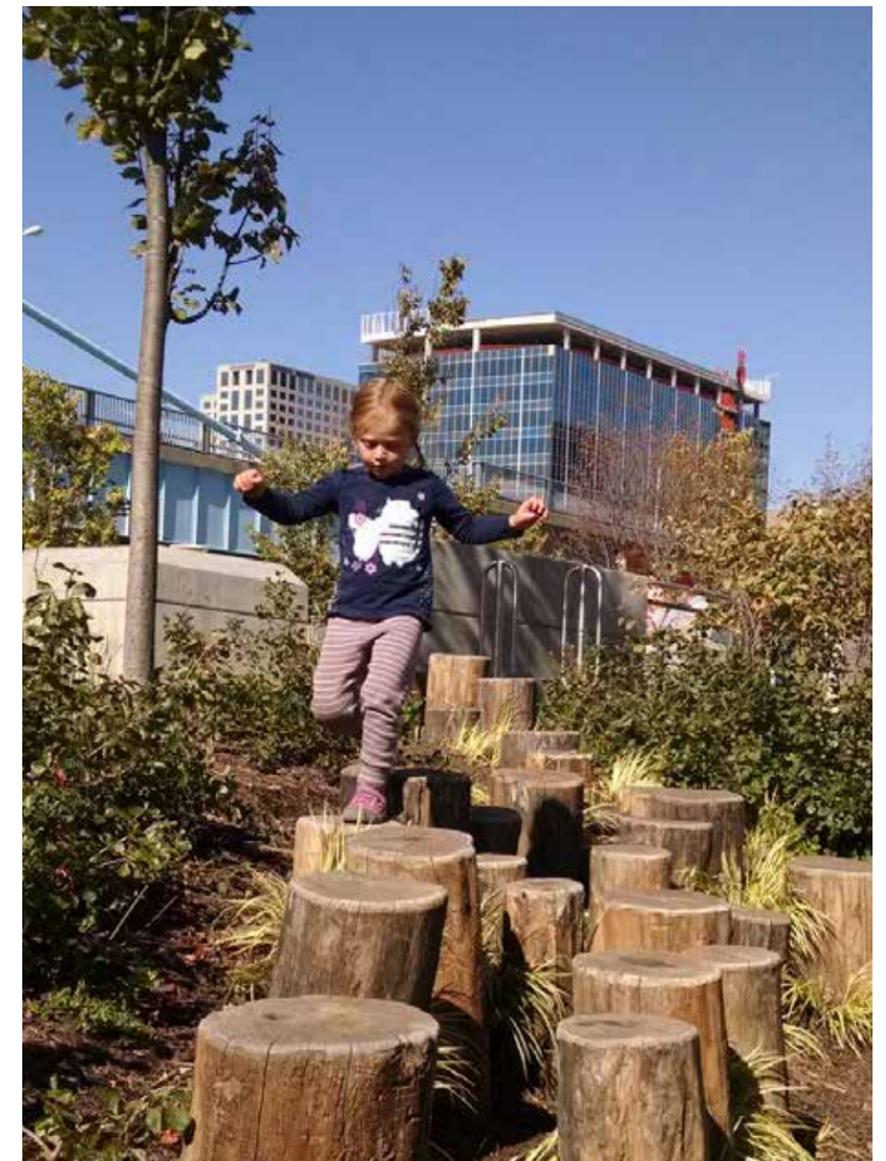
POST OCCUPANCY RESEARCH ON PLAYSAPES

Sasaki's playscapes research initiative is committed to understanding how our built playscapes function. We conduct vigorous post-occupancy evaluations to understand how children, families, communities and maintenance teams interact with the space. We interview stakeholders and park visitors, and we collect data on how each part of the designed playscape is actually being used. At Smale Riverfront Park, our data found that 88% of children were engaged in active play and that the adventurous components encouraged people of all ages to play together.



THE PLAY TOOLKIT

Grounded in research on the developmental benefits of play for children, Sasaki's play toolkit explores and clarifies how different types of playscapes can support the physical, emotional and cognitive health of urban children. The toolkit informs our designs and structures conversations with clients and communities about the value of incorporating risky adventurous play opportunities, immersive natural and dramatic environments and interactive constructive play provocations within urban public landscapes.



OUR VALUES

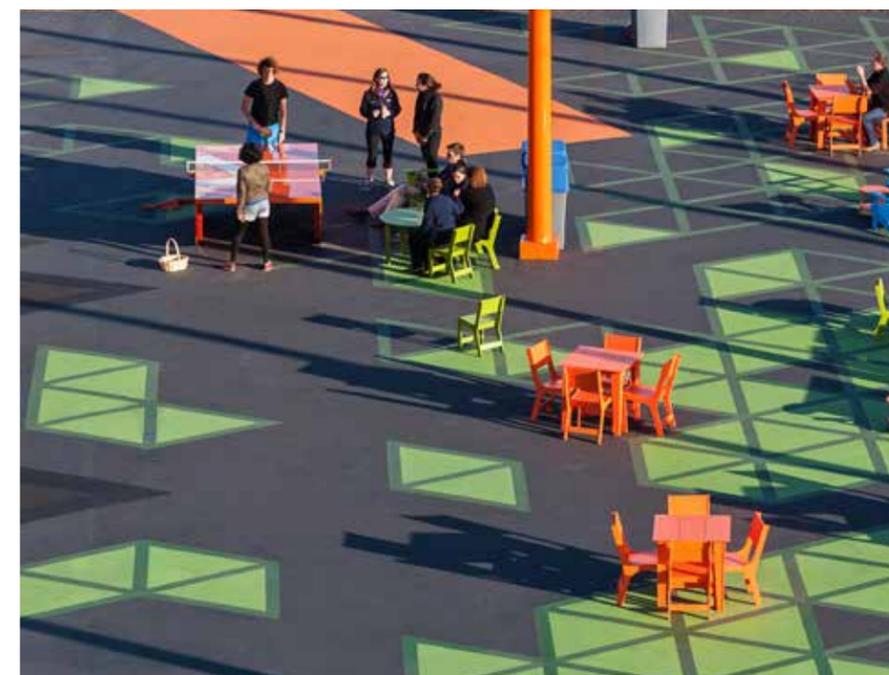
Fostering Identity Through Branding and Signage

Our environmental graphic design experts bring a wealth of multidisciplinary resources and strategic insight to park wayfinding and interpretive projects. We have partnered with park systems large and small—as well as urban districts, campuses, real estate developments, and civic spaces—to create wayfinding programs that go beyond clients' functional requirements. Again and again, Sasaki's body of work articulates the spirit of the place, signaling to visitors and residents they are a part of something special.



BONNET SPRINGS PARK

Over the past several months, the Sasaki team has been developing a wayfinding and signage program for Bonnet Springs Park. Our methodology combines typographic design, branding, and wayfinding into a seamless, integrated system. Dispersed throughout the entire 180-acre multi-feature park, the signage and wayfinding program aims to capture the unique aesthetic qualities of the landscape, highlight aspects of the site's history, create a recognizable visual style and engage visitors with clear orientation throughout the entire park.



The park belongs to all of Alabama.

There are a lot of things to learn and experience besides the beach.

ALABAMA'S **GULF STATE PARK**

Make the individual state park the primary identifier.

GULF STATE PARK

Sasaki's Master Plan builds on the park's unique assets to transform it into an international model of environmental and economic sustainability. Gulf State Park attracts a wide variety of visitors looking to explore, discover and play. The branding is a fun and bold representation of the various ecosystems and wildlife that make Gulf State Park unique.

LAWN ON D

Sasaki's work on the Lawn on D vividly demonstrates landscape itself serving as a flexible framework for experimental art and programming. As part of the design, our team designed a playful and colorful carpet to evoke the spirit of the space.



ITHACA COMMONS

A new pedestrian-oriented space blended landscape design and wayfinding—sharing a common language of organic materials.