



OPENLANDS

The Openlands garden, designed by Culliton Quinn Landscape Architecture Workshop for the 2011 Chicago Flower and Garden Show at Navy Pier, captured the essence of this non-profit land conservation organization. A goal of Openlands is to educate the public, and two of their programs—TreeKeepers and the Green School Program—support this effort. These programs, in addition to Openlands’ overall efforts, helped shape the design objectives for this demonstration garden. Elements of the garden can be translated to such applications as an urban backyard, parkway planting, outdoor classroom, urban park, or entrance to a nature center.

Sustainable measures—in line with the organization’s goals of water conservation, stormwater management, land conservation and restoration efforts—can be seen throughout many facets of the landscape. Rainwater is maintained on-site through the use of rainwater recycling, a rain garden, and a green roof; and native planting environments are featured. Additionally, all lumber for the project was sourced using dead or diseased trees from the area’s urban forest.

An artful aesthetic is instilled in the garden’s different features: a rain garden captures the roof water from a water rill; urban lumber was used to create the zigzag steps; and the steel rain barrel breaks away from typical utilitarian barrels. A boulder outcropping was shaped into seating, and a wooden plank swing was used as a nostalgic nod to a tree swing. The garden wall was decorated with concrete art pieces created by students from Lincoln Park High School, who also volunteered at the show.

This project was a true collaboration between Openlands, the landscape architect, suppliers, contractors, and student volunteers. At the show’s conclusion, all trees were donated to Chicago Public Schools, and the 1,500 sedges were used as part of the Green School Program for Lincoln Park High School. The pergola was milled into flooring, and the wall siding and slabs will likely become a part of a designer’s furniture piece or a local restaurant’s decor. Ultimately, the landscape attracted visitors with its interactive quality and revealed the beauty of ecologically sensitive design.





ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

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CULLITON QUINN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE WORKSHOP

LOCATION 2011 Chicago Flower and Garden Show

CLIENT Openlands

PROJECT TEAM A1 Contractors
Dirsmith Construction
G. Fontana and Sons
Horigan Urban Forest Products
Lurvey Landscape Supply
Midwest Groundcovers
Orsolini Welding and Fabricating
Poul's Landscaping & Nursery
Rosebrook Pools
Safer Foundation