

BRANCH TSUKISAMU SAPPORO

Turning commercial space to place of relaxation



Submitted for:
IFLA AAPME Awards 2023-Parks and Open space

PROJECT TITLE

Branch Tsukisamu Sapporo

PROJECT STATEMENT

Branch Tsukisamu Sapporo blends commercial space with park-like open space to create a new community recreation area.

Many conventional commercial facilities have open spaces which are not structured around the spaces, and only provide a large space for events or breaks between shopping. We overturned this concept, starting with the idea of creating a park-like gathering place.

Since social economic structure changing to e-commerce, our client is concerned about the decreasing number of customers using commercial facilities.

Going shopping was to enjoy family time and socialise with locals, but with e-commerce market expansion, the need to go out has dropped. However, the diversification of lifestyles has increased the desire for comfortable places such as parks and green spaces. But shrinking government budgets and numerous regulations decrease home-like facilities and make them harder to use. By providing a mix of "commerce" as a daily-life function, and "parks" as places for interaction and relaxation, we developed facilities that become the core of local community for gathering.

While aging and declining population make it difficult to maintain parks as public facilities, the private sector's ability to combine economic and public benefits is an example of how to enhance the community's liveability and security.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Background

Taking over long-been-loved-community land

The site is located in the centre of Sapporo, Hokkaido. It had been used as a venue for livestock-related events since 1972 as the Hokkaido Industrial Exhibition Centre. Due to the deterioration of the facilities, the buildings were demolished, and the land was sold to the private sector. The site had long been a popular event venue for the locals. It is also important to maintain harmony with the surrounding environment, as the site is located in a greenery and scenic area of Sapporo City.

Proposal outline

Our client which a major commercial facility developer in Japan requests us to make the proposal for emphasising the landscape.

We presented 3 basic principles in landscape proposal:

- Aiming to create a place of recreation and relaxation where people, town, and greenery are connected by creating a commercial facility which maintains harmony with the lush green surrounding environment and has a park function to provide locals a place of interaction.
- The 4 pillars of the project, "Convenient living facilities supporting the locals' daily life" as the base, "Green and open park facility", "Human resource development through childcare support and start-up shops", and "Health support through providing health activities, exercise opportunities, and various medical clinics".
- Our vision is not limited only to the site but also aims to actively create a continuous network with the surrounding parks and green spaces and to improve the resource value of the entire region in various aspects, including landscape, activities, and communication of community.

After this proposal was evaluated, the project was implemented. As landscape architects, we were in charge of master planning, schematic design, detailed design, and site supervision.

Context investigation

Strengthen site identity

The site is 45,000 square-metre between Tsukisamu and Raunenai river which has long been maintained as green area in Sapporo. It is located in residential area. Primary schools, kindergartens, and nurseries are within walking distance. The need of children commuting from schools and families raising children to use the park was highly considered.

In terms of the environment, this area is windy, the street trees are maintained, and green network is protected. To protect and connect this green continuity, we provide more accessibility to this site, enrich paths for walking and commuting to school, and support community activities.

Master plan

Master plan reflects convenience and comfort.

- The site is triangular, car park is in the centre after entering from the road, and the facilities are around it.
- Shopping centre is close to car park to let shopping be done in a short time.
- Besides gym and sports facilities in Health support zone, there are also various clinics. It is easy to access from car park and pedestrian paths by concerning universal design.
- Park zone is planned to include commercial facilities by scattering them throughout green space. Aiming to be a relaxing place, visitors can enjoy shopping while strolling in the park, or have a meal. It is placed by keeping a distance from car park for children's safety. This area also includes a nursery and is expected to be used on a daily basis.

Design intent

The park area is considered to be the most focused area of landscape design.

Integrating climatic characteristics into the design

Sapporo is a northern region with a lot of snow in winter. To be able to use in the winter, we have provided GANGI - A Japanese traditional roof that protrudes diagonally from the building supported by posts to protect against snow which can be seen in commercial districts in the snowy regions. Gangi is a comfortable passageway to move through without getting wet from rain or snow, a shelter from sudden weather changes, and a rest area to avoid the summer sun. A series of Gangi was placed within the park to connect spaces and functions together, with commercial facilities and small resting spots aligning along it.

Considering the number of visitors and scenes: Rest spaces of various sizes.

This facility is intended for varieties of visitors, such as those who come for a walk alone, come with friends, families with children, and groups at events. To allow visitors to spend time comfortably at their own place, we divided the space into different sizes. The planning let the visitors choose a place according to the season, read a book alone quietly, play table tennis, or have a pizza party.

Enjoy the seasons of Hokkaido: Stream running through the centre of the site.

- Water playing

The site is rich in groundwater, it flows in a constructed waterway running through the site. The upstream section is for playing, while the downstream is for landscaping. As there is no water playground nearby the park, this place is very lively with children coming along with families in the summer. Water playground tends to be avoided in commercial facilities due to the cost of water quality management and the difficulty of safety management. However, it is placed in the centre of the park as an important element for more attraction and becomes the most popular spot in the park.

- Water garden reflecting four seasons.

The downstream flows through the perennial plant garden maintained by local gardeners, and is designed to welcome visitors with seasonal flowers and lead them into the park. It is also as a mirror reflecting the scenery of each season on the surface.

Lighting plan suppressed in consideration of light from the buildings:
Collaboration with lighting designers.

As the building is a commercial facility, the lights inside the building leak out brightly even at night. So the landscape lighting was subdued by placing the minimum amount of lights necessary for movement in the aisles. The paths from building to building were designed to let visitors stroll through the park while watching their steps and surroundings.

Common drawing room and fireplace

A shared space is where anybody can freely rest indoors. This is unique to northern regions. Even in cold weather, people will go outside, get into a warm indoor place to warm up, then go outside again when they feel warm enough. This is called a warming room. In the summer, it can be used in the opposite way. The entire facility makes people able to visit the park all year round.

The fireplace is installed in the warming room, and firewood is installed as the hedge along Gangi around the site showing combined practicality and design.

Contributing to the local community as a private company

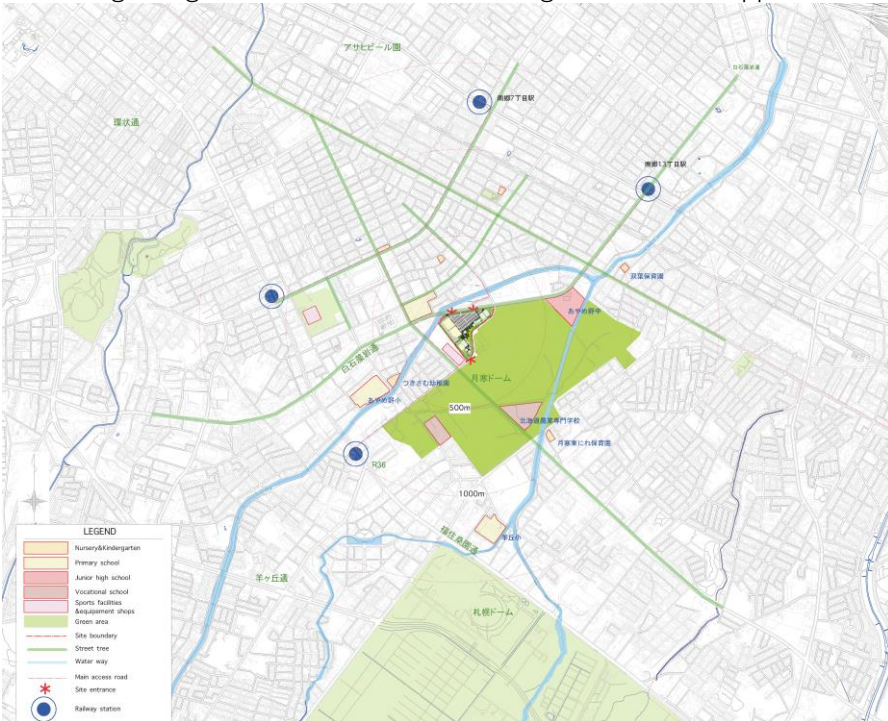
The name of this place, "BRANCH", is from the image of a widely spreading branch of a tree, and is a commercial complex that our client is developing across the country for fostering local communities based on the concept of 'connecting, linking, and spreading'. Moreover, they aim to contribute to solving local issues. For example, the nursery in Branch Tsukisamu, employees of this facility or any locals can leave their children here before going to work or running errands, then be back to buy dinner and pick them up later. The children can also interact with rich greenery. The positive working environment for mothers has also attracted a lot of interest from the locals and is expected by the government as an initiative to support childcare.

Besides the earthquake, which is common in Japan. Countermeasures against various disasters are needed, such as torrential rain disasters that have occurred frequently in recent years, and winter snowstorms caused by the northern climate of Hokkaido. In order to contribute to safety and security of local community, this commercial facility has formed a partnership with the City of Sapporo in the event of a disaster. It is ready to act as an evacuation centre, and can instantly provide food, drinks, and other supplies.

Our client plans to continue working with the government to develop recreation areas that are needed in the region.



Locating along the river that connects the green area in Sapporo.



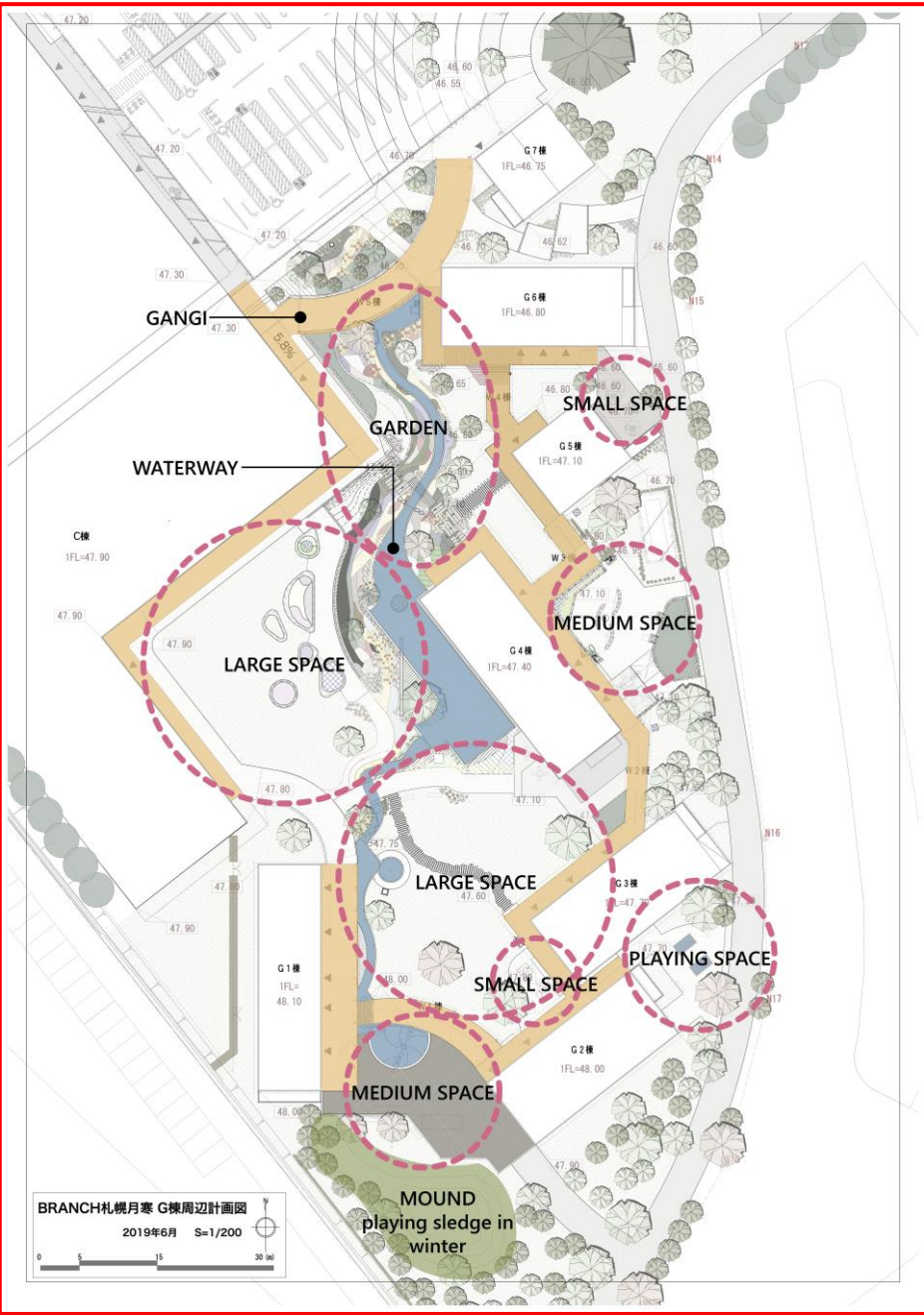
Surrounded by residential area with many schools, make it an area with many children and students



The site is characterised into four zones; Shopping centre, Park, Health support, and Human development.



In the event of a disaster, the large space will be used as an evacuation centre to help victims. An agreement has also been signed with Sapporo City to provide food and medical assistance.



Gangi connects buildings to make it easy to move around and use the inside and outside even in bad weather.



The park is accessible from various directions from the residential area by emphasising connecting to the surrounding road network. It can be used by locals and shoppers, including students commuting to schools and pedestrians.



The entrance of the park from the pedestrian path is wide and bright.



A pedestrian path is built outside the site to connect the surrounding roads. The loose material of pavement as wood chips not only makes visitors feel cosy but also ensures that rainwater can infiltrate into the ground.



Walking kindergarten children is an everyday scenery.



Small space is located along the pedestrian path, away from the main circulation to let visitors spend time alone or in a small group.



Playing space for families and friends, the equipment is rent-free.



Medium space is reserved for groups, and designed to be as place for interaction.





The large lawn plaza surrounded by Gangi is used as a park on a daily basis and for holding events.



Flowers and water flow in the garden leading the sight from the entrance to the back of the site. The surface of the water reflects the season change and time flow.



Garden changing follows the season as a place to relax.



Flowers and plants are managed by local gardeners





The fountain in the water playground is quietly releasing water from underground.



Gangi adjacent to the water playground is wide and provides a rest space for allowing parents to watch their children play



A well pump which was often installed in old houses becomes a popular play spot for children.





The colourful skylights drop sunlight into the dark space underneath the roof.



Firewood moderately divides the space



Providing a rest place under the roof



"Hung seat" is set up nearby Gangi, wherever visitors can rest during their walk.



In winter, the ice lighting event is held as a participatory programme.



Gangi provides a comfortable under-roof space for moving around even in winter. The common drawing room is installed with a fireplace and becomes a warming room in winter. The firewood placed at Gangi also serves as a space design.



The mound named "Tsukiyama" becomes a place for children to play sledge in winter.



As the lights from the building are bright, the lighting of the landscape emphasises continuity to guild the aisle.