

## ■ Project Title

**Project Title:** Green Hills Tsuyama - A park that will grow up over the years and create amenities for visitors.

**Project Location:** Tsuyama city, Okayama Prefecture, Japan

**Project Type:** Park and Open space

**Completion Date:** November 1998

**Client:** Okayama Prefecture Government

■ **Project Statement:**

- Green Hills TSUYAMA is "the green lung" at the core of Tsuyama, Japan, providing a venue for cultural events and recreational activities which promote good personal and social health for a population previously seriously underserved by significant public open space in a setting that respects the existing character and heritage of the site and surrounding areas creating a harmonious and sustainable relationship between Man and Nature within a dense urban environment.
- Although the project had been undertaken before environmental issues and social diversity became a priority, careful consideration had been given to the existing topography, water systems, and planting to create a park that integrates with the town and adjacent nature.
- As a result, the park has created a beautiful landscape. It is a sustainable park that has improved over time and continues to grow with its surroundings until the present day.
- It is also an inclusive space where healthy and physically weak people can enjoy walking in a relaxing natural setting.
- Public open space assets are also the most valuable cultural assets of the 21st century. In the 35 years since its completion, the trees have grown so much that the park's edges have blended perfectly with the surrounding mountain greenery, making it feel like the park has existed for decades

220 Words

## ■ Project Narrative

### 1. Project location, Size, and Scope

- Green Hills Tsuyama is an urban resort park with 29 hectares, located in the heart of Tsuyama City, Okayama Prefecture, covering the northern part of Okayama Prefecture, where approximately 110,000+ residents live.
- This park was planned and completed almost 25 years ago as a cultural and healthy recreation park suitable for 21st-century lifestyles. An early model of environmental and social sustainability design can be said.
- The project's scope and our office's role were to develop a landscape master plan, landscape design, and the preparation of design drawings.
- In addition, since the landscape architect was expected to serve as the total coordinator, the CEO of our office, who was the master landscape architect, was responsible for coordinating not only the landscape architect but also the architects for the design of the facilities in the park and the engineers for the design of the utilities.
- He was also responsible for supervising the entire site's design, including utilities such as rainwater drainage, water supply and sewage, and lighting plans, for creating the city of Tsuyama's green infrastructure.

### 2. Site Context and investigation:

- Tsuyama City has a long history of over 400 years. The park is conceived to contribute to the cultural heritage of the area and provide a much-needed public space for festivals, cultural events, and personal recreation and discovery.
- Located on the north side of the Yoshii River, the park is situated in a natural basin surrounded by mountains on all sides. As a result, the urban area has developed in a straight line from the Yoshii River northward up the valley.
- First, we attempted to analyze the relationship between the landscape elements of the Tsuyama Basin, natural elements such as the surrounding mountains and rivers, and urban elements such as historical facilities and symbolic buildings, and the corridors (Axis) connecting them. So, it was found that the Historical Axis, Urban Axis, and Spiritual Axis overlap in some parts of the site.
- Furthermore, the site was the former site of the Dairy Farming Research Institute of the Okayama Prefectural Government, where a dairy farm was left.
- Therefore, the site was characterized by idyllic grassland with scattered trees growing in some places. In addition, one of the most notable features of the site is its excellent location, with a view of the city below and the mountains that surround the city.
- Due to this background, the site initially had a spacious pastoral landscape. We saw this as a strength of the site and succeeded in creating a new recreational park while respecting it.

- The ecologically sensitive, back-to-nature park, in other words, "sustainable relationship between human and nature," evokes the wild nature often lost in modern life, allowing families and children to play freely in nature.

### **3. Design Program:**

- The design program was formulated in the Master Plan phase. We thought about how can all Okayama citizens enjoy and relax in this park.
- The site used to be divided by a road from north to south. We designed carefully to integrate the north and south sites so that a tunnel was built almost in the center of the site to allow free access between them.
- The site was then divided into two zones characterized by different functions. The north side of the site was the "Recreation and Health Zone," which included a children's playground, a wildflower zone, and a water park.
- On the other hand, the south side of the site was designated as a "culture and recreation zone," with a large lawn, amphitheater, forest zone, music hall, art museum, and artists' village. By integrating these two zones, it is possible to realize the function of a "cultural and health recreation park."
- The site was also designed to be positioned in a broader context than just the site alone. For example, the outdoor stage on the south site is located at the intersection of three axes, as described in captor 3.

### **4. Design Theme (intent) :**

- The consistent design theme of the park was to harmoniously combine the site's spacious, rural landscape and natural potential and to create a beautiful public space. This park could be an asset to the community, including the cultural, artistic, and social sustainability aspects of Tsuyama while integrating seamlessly with the adjacent nature.

### **5. Environmental impact and concerns**

- Considering sustainable design as carefully valuing nature's inherent potential, we attempted to preserve the undulating topography and vegetation as much as possible. Then by adding new undulations and plants that fit the existing context. The result is a park that realizes a sustainable relationship between people and nature.
- Moreover, a retention pond was introduced to control stormwater runoff during regular times. This retention pond is positioned as one of the facilities for stormwater runoff for not only the park but also the entire city of Tsuyama.
- In addition, the regulating pond is used for an iris garden. This contributes to improving the quality of the living environment around the park.

## **6. Materials and installation method : Borrowed landscape and lent landscape**

- Using natural materials such as stone, brick, and wood has created a sense of harmony and unity with nature.
- By skillfully utilizing the Japanese traditional technique "SHAKKEI" (borrowed landscape) and incorporating the surrounding mountains in the background as part of the park landscape (creating a borrowed landscape), the park gives us the feeling of being in the midst of magnificent nature and a sense of connection with nature.
- At the same time, the park itself becomes an integral component of the overall landscape and "LENDS" its features to the surrounding environment resulting in a cohesive whole. The park has become an integral part of the area, creating a beautiful landscape. The interrelationship between nature within the park and the park standing amid nature allows users to experience a beautiful and complex natural environment and the process of nature's return.

## **7. Collaboration with the client and other designers**

### **① Collaboration with the Owner:**

- This was a special project of the Governor's policy in Okayama Prefecture. So it was necessary to have the approval and permission of the Governor. Therefore, the Governor nominated the Commissioner as his advisor. The Commissioner chose the Landscape Architect and Architect.
- We made the Master Plan with the approval of the Commissioner, government staff & other designers (architects & engineers)

### **② Collaboration with the Other Designer:**

- The Landscape Architect designed the Master plan for the park and collaborated with the Architects on the designs for the various buildings in the park to coordinate the design of the buildings and landscape. Furthermore, regarding the infrastructure, the Landscape Architect collaborated with the Civil Engineer. The Landscape Architect provided the image for the park, alignment of paths and grading, etc., to the Civil Engineers; then, the Civil Engineer worked and studied them and coordinated with Landscape Architect to refine the design. The Landscape Architect made the management guidelines for the whole area, including the plants & flowers.

Architects: Atsushi Kitagawara Architects Inc. (Atsushi Kitagawara)

Ken Yokogawa Architects & Associates Inc. (Ken Yokogawa)

Atelier Zo (Reiko Tomita)

Civil Engineer: Wesco Co., Ltd.

M&E Engineer: EEC Co., Ltd.

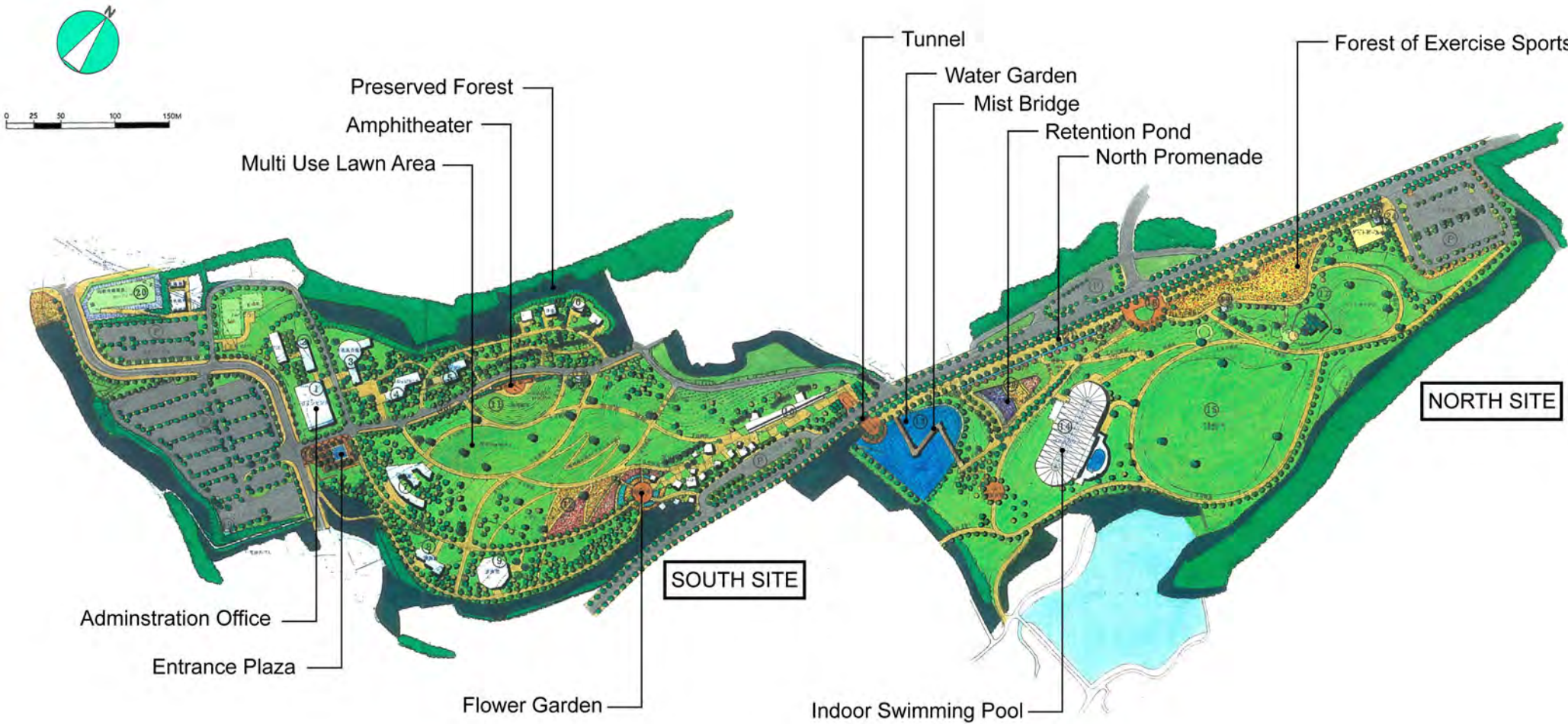
## **8. Other significant issues**

- The Green Hills Tsuyama is an essential asset for the community, offering opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and cultural events to the locals. It has become a valuable social and environmental resource.
- We look forward to the further growth of the park in conjunction with its management.
- This work was awarded an aging prize in the 2010 Landscape Architecture Society of Japan's annual awards.

1284 Words

# Green Hills TSUYAMA

Project Location: Tsuyama City, Okayama Prefecture, Japan  
Owner/Client: Okayama Prefecture Government  
Size: 29 ha



SITE PLAN



The amphitheater with the sloping lawn accommodates seating provides open views and pleasant breeze.



The amphitheater is for regional and special community events. The sloping lawn accommodates seating for the theater as well as picnics and other recreational activities.



The walkways are designed to undulate according to the natural topography gently. Exciting changes of viewpoint along the walkways let visitors discover the beauty of nature in the site as they walk through the park.



Night view across the water garden to the Glass House and pool in the "Northern Zone." Night lighting is concentrated around high-use areas and is located to allow visitors to enjoy views of the surrounding landscape and night sky.



This fountain's materials, colors, and arrangement show the relationship between Mother Nature (earth) and the native flowers surrounding this hilltop plaza. The design references the role of natural weathering processes and water in generating the foundations of life.



image06: The adventure playground encourages creativities as children explore the green and play along the "earth walls" constructed of local brick.



An interactive water feature welcomes visitors at the south entrance plaza. During summer, children enjoy the coolness of playing in the fountain and provide a glimpse of the excitement and amenity waiting in the park to visitors just arriving.



The borrowed mountain landscape from a perfect natural setting for the stage provides a sense of enclosure for the park. The park and the surrounding environment form a cohesive landscape that effectively borrows and lends views from one another.



Stone-made slider whose scenic surroundings will remain in people's hearts as a primitive landscape.