

IFLA AAPME Awards 2024

Award Categories – Culture and Traditions

PROJECT BINDER

Nanguotou Waterfront Park along the Yellow River

Huiji District, Zhengzhou City, Henan Province, China

Project name : Nanguotou Waterfront Park along the Yellow River
Project address : Huiji District, Zhengzhou City, Henan Province, China
Area (sq.m) : 17250 sq.m
Year of Completion : 2021

PROJECT STATEMENT

Nanguotou Waterfront Park, covering an area of 17,250 square meters, is located along the southern bank of Yellow River in Zhengzhou. Originally it was a remnant barrage from the dismantling of Huayuankou Water Conservancy Hub Project. In 1964, it was wrapped and renovated, and was named "Nanguotou." The design, inspired by the site's rich historical and cultural heritage, integrates practical and aesthetic elements to enhance its cultural display and landscape architecture, meeting both functional and environmental requirements.

The project utilizes natural waterfront landscape resources to build an elevated tourism complex for river viewing. The local Red Mountain Rocks, initially used for embankment reinforcement, are selected for their cultural sustainability, becoming a main element supporting the site's spirit. Emphasizing "green touring, recreational entertainment, and energy replenishment", the park serves as an outdoor city parlor and a vibrant hub along the Yellow River tourism route, also a cultural landmark deeply rooted in a sense of cultural identity. The park preserves riverside traditions for centuries, vividly "telling the story of the Yellow River" through its design. Furthermore, the project acts as a core demonstration site for implementing the national strategy of ecological protection and high-quality development in the Yellow River Basin.

PROJECT NARRATIVE AND CONTENTS

Project Background

The Yellow River, with its winding course and endless sands, breaks free from the last mountainous constraints at Taohuayu Valley in Xingyang, Zhengzhou. Carrying a powerful flow, it continues downstream through the middle reaches and finally enters the lower reaches. The Nanguotou Barrage is situated in the upper section of the river's lower reach and was initially a barrage known as Huayuankou Water Conservancy Hub in the mid-1950s. Nevertheless, the excessive silt carried by the river poses significant flood control risks. In 1964, the existing barrage was demolished, leaving behind the remnant now known as Nanguotou. With its solid embankment and unique scenery, Nanguotou attracts many fishermen who set up fishing tourism businesses, and thus the area was bustling with fishing, beach games and horseback riding. However, over time, these activities have caused considerable damage to the ecology of Yellow River. In recent years, many commercial operations have been prohibited, and efforts have been made to restore the ecology of Nanguotou.

Design Concepts and Innovative Ideas

The project prioritizes protection and restoration, and thus a positive and orderly development model is established between the wetland and the city. It aims to restore the area's historical memory, to preserve the existing wetland landscape, and to create an urban wetland park where people and nature harmoniously coexist. The project utilizes natural waterfront landscape resources to build an elevated tourism complex for visitors to view the great river. The local Red Mountain Rocks are selected as the major construction materials, reinforcing the site's spirit. Emphasizing "green touring, recreational entertainment, and energy replenishment", a grand multifunctional tourism complex is to be designed, serving as an outdoor city parlor and a vibrant hub along the Yellow River tourism route, also a cultural landmark deeply rooted in a sense of cultural identity. The park preserves riverside traditions for centuries, vividly "telling the story of the Yellow River" through its design. Furthermore, it acts as a core demonstration site for implementing the national strategy of ecological protection and high-quality development in the Yellow River Basin.

Designing Strategy

- **Cultural Heritage Maintaining: Preserving the Site's Historical Memory**

In the past, to prevent major disasters from breaches in the Yellow River's embankments, numerous flood defense projects were carried out. Starting in the 1950s, these projects began using Red Mountain Rocks as construction materials. Now, the overall landscape design adheres to the site's regional culture, using this kind of embankment building rocks as main elements to support the site's spirit. Meanwhile, the leftover flood control materials are transformed into cultural display landscapes for the history of flood defense projects, preserving the site's historical and cultural memory and shaping a profound humanistic atmosphere.

- **Vegetation Re-greening and Rainwater Management: Creating an Ecological Protection Model**

Focusing on vegetation re-greening, natural habitat restoration, and biodiversity creation, certain human interventions are made to establish the foundation for site construction. At the same time, a wetland monitoring and management mechanism is established, creating a model of ecological protection.

- **Urban Leisure and Entertainment: Meeting Humanistic Needs**

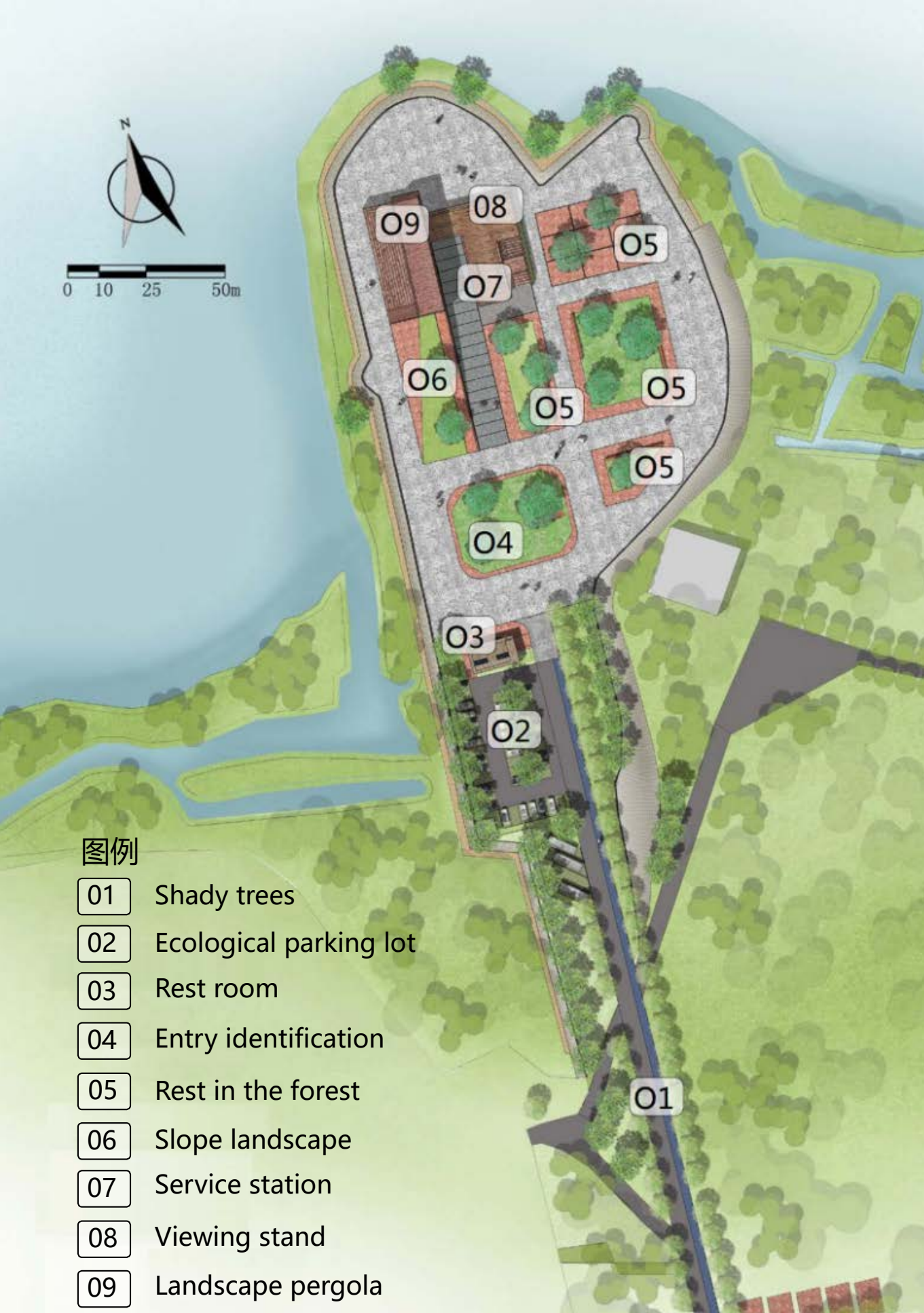
On the basis of prioritizing ecological protection, suitable spaces for cultural and recreational activities are created within the site, meeting both emotional and functional needs of the public.

Space Layout Featuring Traditional Elements

The Yellow River, "Mother River" of China, is the primary cradle of Chinese civilization. Every Chinese person has an innate desire to feel and get close to it whether living along it or not. Prioritizing ecological protection, the design creates suitable spaces for cultural and leisure activities. The western section of the park is designed as a river-viewing platform, allowing visitors to ascend and enjoy the magnificent spectacle of the Yellow River, experiencing the breathtaking view of "the full setting sun on the great river". In the central area is the Yellow River Service Station. There are areas for cultural displaying and indoor recreation, catering to locals' desires for tea and scenic relaxation. The eastern section features the Willow Shade Theater, available for local government to carry out the "Yellow River Cultural Tour" during Culture Festival, and serving as an open-air venue for various outdoor events, including small concerts, press conferences, art performances, and relaxation. The overall design meets both the emotional and functional needs of the people.

Project Benefits and Positive Influence

Once a parking lot for pushing tourism and visitors, this site now showcases the unique charm of culture of Yellow River following environmental restoration. The brick-red buildings blend harmoniously with the sandy hues of the Yellow River, creating a natural, harmonious, and dynamic atmosphere. Riding bicycles to Nanguotou to watch the sunset has become a favored leisure activity for countless locals of Zhengzhou. Ascending the river-viewing platform, visitors will be greeted by the breeze over the Yellow River, and by the railing, they can overlook the distant river and nearby sandbars, experiencing the splendid spectacle of the setting sun along the river. Today, Nanguotou has been revitalized into a suburban park teeming with a series of ecological and cultural landscapes. It symbolizes not only the local government's concepts on the ecological and cultural development along the Yellow River, but also stands as a significant cultural landmark for the city.



project brief

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2013, current situation photo

Unique scenery, fishing boats, but at the same time ecological destruction



2018, current situation photo

Commercial operations were banned and ecological restoration was carried out in Nanbaotou



2024, current situation photo

The vegetation is green, the ecology is restored, and the scenery of the river can be seen on the stage



2013, current situation photo

Beach activity

Fishing boats swarm together

ecological damage



2018, current situation photo

Break up the beach and dam the bank

Become a parking lot

Overlooking the Yellow River

Historical change

With its solid embankment and unique scenery, Nanguotou attracts many fishermen who set up fishing tourism businesses, and thus the area was bustling with fishing, beach games and horseback riding. However, over time, these activities have caused considerable damage to the ecology of Yellow River. In recent years, many commercial operations have been prohibited, and efforts have been made to restore the ecology of Nanguotou.



Design Intent

The project prioritizes protection and restoration, and thus a positive and orderly development model is established between the wetland and the city. It aims to restore the area's historical memory, to preserve the existing wetland landscape, and to create an urban wetland park where people and nature harmoniously coexist.



Designing Strategy: Cultural Heritage Maintaining: Preserving the Site's Historical Memory

The overall landscape design adheres to the site's regional culture, using this kind of embankment building rocks as main elements to support the site's spirit. Meanwhile, the leftover flood control materials are transformed into cultural display landscapes for the history of flood defense projects, preserving the site's historical and cultural memory and shaping a profound humanistic atmosphere.



Designing Strategy: Vegetation Re-greening and Rainwater Management: Creating an Ecological Protection Model

Focusing on vegetation re-greening, natural habitat restoration, and biodiversity creation, certain human interventions are made to establish the foundation for site construction. At the same time, a wetland monitoring and management mechanism is established, creating a model of ecological protection.



(1) River platform

Climb high and look far away to see the river scenery

(2) Yellow River stage Station

Drink tea, enjoy the scenery, relax

(3) Willow Theatre

Parties, group activities

Riverside ride

Designing Strategy: Urban Leisure and Entertainment: Meeting Humanistic Needs

On the basis of prioritizing ecological protection, suitable spaces for cultural and recreational activities are created within the site, meeting both emotional and functional needs of the public.



Scheme design: (1) River platform

The western section of the park is designed as a river-viewing platform, allowing visitors to ascend and enjoy the magnificent spectacle of the Yellow River, experiencing the breathtaking view of "the full setting sun on the great river".



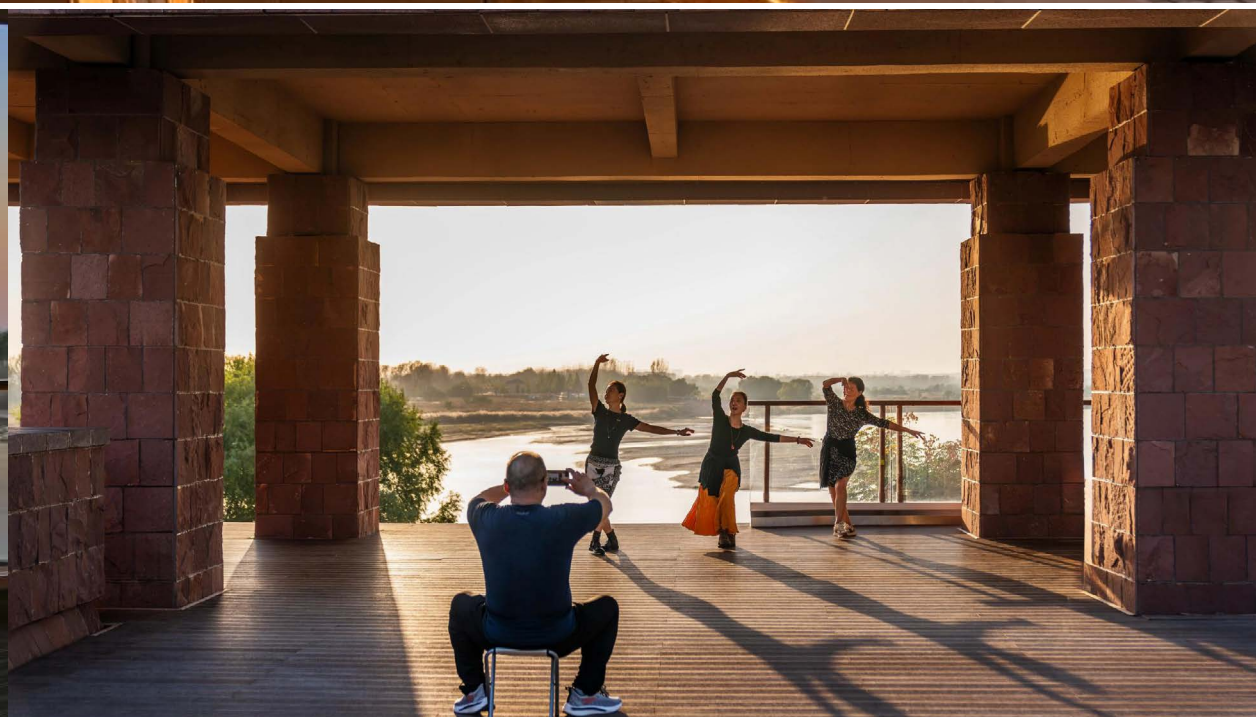
Scheme design: (2) Yellow River stage Station

In the central area is the Yellow River Service Station. There are areas for cultural displaying and indoor recreation, catering to locals' desires for tea and scenic relaxation.



Scheme design: (3) Willow Theatre

The eastern section features the Willow Shade Theater, available for local government to carry out the "Yellow River Cultural Tour" during Culture Festival, and serving as an open-air venue for various outdoor events, including small concerts, press conferences, art performances, and relaxation.



Project effect

Once a parking lot for pushing tourism and visitors, this site now showcases the unique charm of culture of Yellow River following environmental restoration. The brick-red buildings blend harmoniously with the sandy hues of the Yellow River, creating a natural, harmonious, and dynamic atmosphere. Riding bicycles to Nanguotou to watch the sunset has become a favored leisure activity for countless locals of Zhengzhou.