

# Landscape Revitalization for Ford World Headquarters

Dearborn, MI

*The project is a sustainable and beautiful solution to water management, and at the same time reinterprets the idea of an arboretum into a more modern and accessible place to learn about the native ecology and enjoy the outdoors.*

The expansion and replanning of the arboretum delineates a new environmental model for spaces that expand the company’s focus on human health and wellness. As part of an analysis of the 200-acre Dearborn campus, a 15-acre portion of the existing Arjay Miller Arboretum was transformed from mowed lawn into a thriving meadow that sequesters carbon, filters stormwater, and provides a home for birds and pollinator species. The genesis of the project was to control stormwater in an area that frequently flooded.

The site is reforested with 280 new trees that reflect the variety of the Midwest region, and planted in flowing groves across the site. Understory planting knits together low maintenance meadow grasses and perennials, with new detention ponds to collect stormwater. Rather than seeding the entire 15 acres with one meadow mix, the design team created a quilted pattern of a dozen different seed and plug mixes to correspond to the different topographic ecological conditions of the site.

The native and adaptive landscape features a unique solution to water management, and at the same time reinterprets the idea of an arboretum into a more modern and accessible place to learn about native ecology and enjoy the outdoors.

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**Client**

Ford Motor Company

**Dates**

2017 - 2019

**Size**

15 acres

**Team**

Wade Trim  
Sweeney & Associates  
Wildtype Nursery

**Awards**

AZ Awards, 2022  
Best of Design in Landscape,  
Architect’s Newspaper, 2021

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*The 15-acre arboretum expansion transformed acres of mowed lawn and a utilitarian use for stormwater into a recreational trail system winding through artful landscape topography built from the stockpile spoils. A network of primary paved and secondary aggregate pedestrian paths weaves throughout the site offering a chance for employees and the community to experience biodiversity and the stormwater system up close.*

**PHASE 1**  
*(Arjay Miller  
Arboretum)*  
*Complete*



**PHASE 2**  
*Future*



MASTER PLAN













*Environmental sustainability is a focus of the design which replaces acres of manicured lawn with a sustainable planting solution, as well as retains stormwater on campus, so as not to overwhelm the city stormwater system.*



PHASE 1: NORTH POND

CONNECTION THROUGH TO SOUTH AND EASTERN AREAS

NATIVE  
SMA INTER

ADJUSTING TOWARD EXPANSION

GRASSY ART ROAD

SHRUB DETENTION  
WITH POND

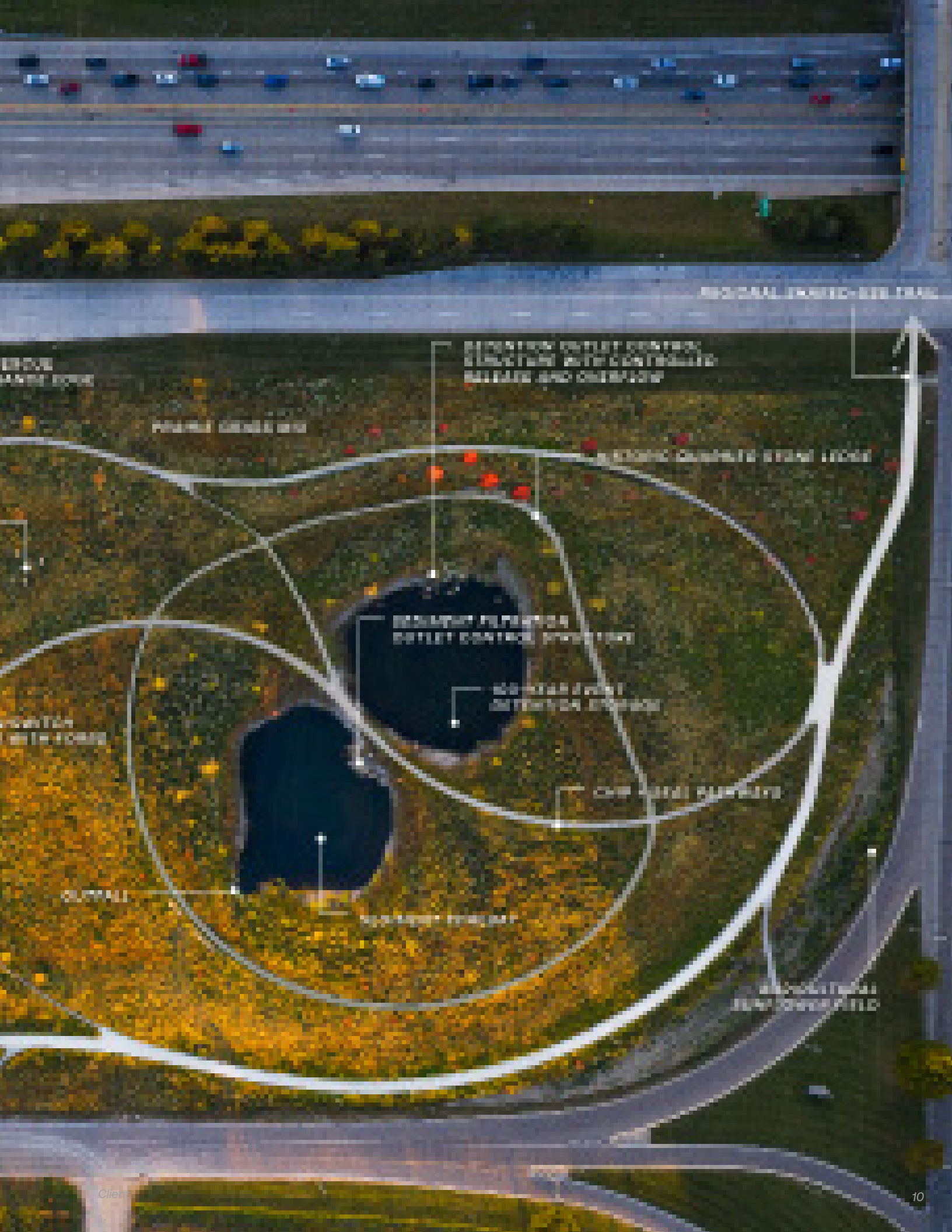
PAVEMENT ADJUSTMENT ZONE

NEW COLLECTOR

GRASSY ADJUSTMENT ZONE

NEW LINE OF POND/SHRUB  
LINE WITH POND





PROPOSED LIMITED-DEBT TRAIL

EXISTING  
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

PROPOSED LANDSCAPE DESIGN

REVISION OUTLET CONTROL  
STRUCTURE WITH CONTROLLED  
RELEASE AND OVERFLOW

EXISTING COMPLETE STORM TANK

DESIGNATED FILTERED  
OUTLET CONTROL STRUCTURE

100-YEAR FLOOD  
DEFLECTION STORAGE

NEW 100-YEAR FLOODLINE

EXISTING  
LANDSCAPE DESIGN

OUTFALL

NEW 100-YEAR FLOODLINE

EXISTING  
STORM TANK



After a deep analysis of the history and complexity of the site ecology, the design team presented a new way of looking at stormwater control to the Ford leadership and these ideas were eagerly embraced as part of a more expansive lens on human health and wellness.

Water Requirement	● ○ ○ ○ ○
Maintenance Level	● ○ ○ ○ ○
Fertilizer	● ○ ○ ○ ○
Biodiversity	● ● ● ● ●
Carbon Sequestrations	● ● ● ● ●
Program	● ● ● ● ○
Stormwater Management	● ● ● ● ●







NEW DATA CENTER

EXISTING AND PROPOSED  
IMPROVEMENTS AND LAND EXPANSION

EXISTING AND PROPOSED

EXISTING AND PROPOSED





PROVIDING A WALKING ROUTE TO THE

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*The team designed several beehives and planted a variety of pollinator-friendly flowers and grasses. The hives are maintained by local beekeepers who harvest excess honey from the honeycombs.*











10.15

OJB



