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Hill Center wins architecture award for urban design

Work on Urban Forest also recognized

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Two area landscape architecture firms recently won awards from the Tennessee Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architecture (ASLA), which were presented at the Growing a Deeper Knowledge Conference.

Hawkins Partners Inc. won an award in the built environment/urban design category for its work on the H.G. Hill Center in Green Hills. Ashworth Environmental Design also won an award in the environmental research and analysis category for its work on a report, "Managing Nashville's Urban Forest."

The Hill Center is a lifestyle center comprised of 220,000 square feet of retail, restaurant and office space. Major site elements include a pedestrian-friendly streetscape that's modeled after traditional neighborhood centers, narrow driving lanes and wide sidewalks. Other details include a contemporary paving pattern utilizing.

'Cohesive design'

A focus on sustainability was a major component in the development of the project. More than 60 percent of the parking is covered, and all site lighting utilizes cut-off luminaires to reduce light pollution.

Hollie Cummings, executive director of ASLA Tennessee Chapter, said on the Hill Center project, the jury acknowledged the effort to combine all the elements necessary to urban design with the requirements of an urban design overlay.

"The jury appreciated the use of details that served to unify the development and resulted in a cohesive design solution," Cummings said.

Kim Hawkins of Hawkins Partners, Inc. said these kinds of awards mean it listened to the clients and delivered a product that met their needs.

"The community developed the urban design overlay for Green Hills, and this was the first time that overlay was put into physical form," Hawkins said. "It was great to bring H.G. Hill Realty's dream and make it coalesce with the community's vision on what the Hill Center could be."

Forest report important

The Managing Nashville's Urban Forest report is the result of a yearlong process of The Metro Tree Advisory Committee. The report proposed a Tree Management Plan for Nashville, which included

creating an urban forester position, conducting surveys of public trees, and developing a master plan for long-term sustainability.

In addition to the mayor's Green Ribbon Committee, the report is also used by the report is used by Trees for a Better Nashville (TBN), a committee formed to discuss tree issues with representatives from Metro Planning, Codes, Public Works, Parks, and Water Services, and Metro Council.

Cummings said the jury recognized the level of public involvement garnered to complete the Managing Nashville's Urban Forest report, and felt the plan was well written and organized.

Carol Ashworth of Ashworth Environmental Design said winning this particular award reassured her that others recognize the importance and value of the Urban Forest.

"My hope is that the report will communicate the shortcomings and opportunities within the city government," Ashworth said.

"I feel hopeful that things are heading in the right direction. There is a real synergy going on in Nashville now with many different groups working on environmental issues that are interconnected. It is an exciting and energizing time to be a landscape architect."
