



IAPD/IPRA Conference 2011

Please join PRI at the 2011 IAPD/IPRA Annual Soaring to New Heights Conference in the Northwest Hall of the Chicago Hilton at booth # 218 on January 27-28, 2011.

Hope to see you there!

True Requirements in the Maintenance of a Sustainable Park

As we begin 2011 and the next decade, we reflect back on an article we wrote about Sustainable Park Design a few years ago. At that time, we looked at issues in park design and development; focusing primarily on material selection choices, limiting toxic maintenance practices, and promoting better water management. We have now had the opportunity to explore these values and program them into several Parks and Recreation projects. As the design profession continues to advance and sell “Sustainable Design”, we need to re-evaluate the realities of the *green* or *sustainable movement*.

Parks and park districts are focused on providing better environments for their patrons. With all this focus on “*green, sustainable, eco-friendly*”, what is really achievable, what is believable?.....

For the rest of the article, please follow the link to our website: <http://www.planres.com/news.php#top>

Is your consultant truly providing sustainable designed solutions?

“Sustainable Design, Green Design, Eco-Design” – these are very trendy and popular terms heard in marketing and promotion. What do they mean and better yet; are they what they say they are? Is it any different than what you received before? How do you know if your consultant is truly providing sustainable designed solutions and improvements? In order to ensure planned improvements are actually sustainable there needs to be a conscious focus on linking all elements of design and cross checking the design for its impact on the ecosystems it falls within. Sustainable design is not a standard off-the-shelf solution that can be applied to any site.

A concerning trend showing up in these economic times is design firms marketing their expertise in “Sustainable Design”. They have qualified, certified, and specially trained staff. They even have flashy new marketing pieces that may show some “Green” design. They can most likely list several sustainable projects that they have worked on as well. The real concern is two-fold;





do they truly understand all the system components that form a functioning ecosystem? Do they have a thorough understanding of soils, hydrology, vegetation, materials and their manufacturing processes and the long term management of each of these components? A bigger question that most clients don't want to ask is how are you designing and developing these high level thinking solutions while offering services at a cut-rate? It is true that sustainably designed development solutions can result in savings; savings that come from reduced maintenance, purchasing fewer chemicals to maintain landscapes and installing less costly infrastructure. The savings do not occur by simply applying a prototype idea on any site, anywhere. A little investment in qualified expertise's that have a real understanding of the science behind sustainable practice and systems as well as defined ability in the art of design is critical in developing sustainable solutions that work over the long hall. It is good to be aware and keep abreast of new programs such as green infrastructure, but one needs to understand the functions of the infrastructure and the functions of the ecosystem in order to create truly sustainable solutions.

That said, PRI offers sustainable design solutions taken from our staff and expertise including:

- **Principal, Keven Graham, who has been involved with the Sustainable SITES™ Initiative from its inception more than 10 years ago.**
- **Professional Natural Resources Staff with 28 years of a true understanding of soils, hydrology, vegetation and long term management components**
- **Planning staff involved with updating municipal ordinances to include sustainable design requirements**
- **LEED Accredited Staff active in the USGBC Organization (officer)**



Recent Grand Openings: We would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff at Northbrook Park District and the Village of Lisle for allowing PRI to be a part of the recent grand openings for Floral Park and DragonFly Landing.