

Where Land and Water Mix

MITHUN

Growing the Next Generation of Learners at the Louisiana Children's Museum

"Mitigation and adaptation go hand-in-hand as two equally important building blocks of the Paris Climate Change Agreement."

—Ban Ki-Moon



Bird Blind
This Bird Blind allows children to observe waterfowl and other birds attracted to the site's various habitats.



Crossing Under and Over
Paths, bridges, stairs and porches were sited to interact with water and the world's largest grove of live oak trees to immerse people in the native landscapes of the region.



Next Generation of Naturalists
Meadows, wetlands, and boardwalks allow budding scientists to observe wildlife and native marsh plants up close.



PROJECT—
Louisiana Children's Museum
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 2019

TEAM—
Landscape Architect / Mithun
Local Landscape Architect / Pastroek and Associates
Architect / Mithun
Civil Engineer / Shenk, Endom & Flanagan, LLC
Ecology / Biohabitats

Deepening Connections
The Louisiana Children's Museum decided to relocate to City Park after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 in order to deepen connections with local families, partners and with the natural world. The site has over eight acres of sensory gardens including a floating classroom, bird blinds and an edible garden surrounded by a hedge of Meyer lemons. The building includes 56,000 square feet of exhibit space, cafe, gathering spaces and administrative offices.

Adaptation and Mitigation
Physical adaptation strategies are necessary to address both short and long term shocks and stressors. The museum site and planting design adapts to changing water levels. The new shoreline habitat and natural drainage system filters over 1.7 million gallons of rainwater annually. In the long term mitigation design, the building uses less energy and less water than a typical similar building—it is on target to receive LEED Gold certification.

Design for Resilience
The museum's vision was to holistically support children and families and build a more resilient region through joyful connections with the water and land systems that are integral to the local culture, economy and a sustained environment. Literacy partners, environmental education partners and child development organizations joined to provide holistic services at this new model for a children's museum. Growing social resilience is key since it is the number one indicator of a community's ability to adapt in the face of change.

Storing stormwater in City Park, a strategy of the New Orleans Water Plan, can reduce flooding in the Tremé and French Quarter neighborhoods. The museum site was designed to hold water to help reduce this city-wide flooding.



1 Foot of Storage: 6.72 Acre Feet



2 Feet of Storage: 20.79 Acre Feet



3 Feet of Storage: 51.08 Acre Feet



4 Feet of Storage: 106.77 Acre Feet