CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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The Cleveland Museum of Natural History has implemented a transformation of its campus over the past decade. Pashek+MTR designed the new landscapes of the Museum complex, including the Smith Environmental Courtyard, the Museum's main entrance, and a new Welcome Garden. Implemented alongside a full building renovation and major addition, the Museum landscapes demonstrate its science- and sustainability-driven mission. As described in an April 2024 New York Times' article about the project, "...where once stood a parking lot — the museum's two-acre grounds have now been landscaped into a prairie of native Ohio grasses and plants, thus completing the symbolic links between the natural evolution of Northeastern Ohio and the one interpreted inside the natural history museum. "

The Welcome Garden design incorporated numerous Nassauer "cues to care" strategies. To make "messy" meadow-like mixed perennial plantings more palatable in an urban context, the planting beds have mowed lawn borders, and have a highly curated plant palette. We selected perennials that are lower-growing, with staggered bloom times over the growing season, and with a high proportion of grasses for texture contrast and winter interest. Plantings along the public road feature low-growing native shrubs for structure and color during winter and spring. Interpretive signs communicate sustainable site design features such as native plants and benefits for pollinators and wildlife, rain gardens and stormwater management, and geology and ecology of Northeast Ohio.



Rock Garden displaying geology and ecology of Northeast Ohio



Welcome Garden frames main entrance to building



Meadow-like Mixed Plantings benefit pollinators and wildlife in Bird Garden





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