myaamii wiiaanki

we are miami
my a a m i i w i a a n k i

we are m i a m i
reconnecting a scattered community
rebuilding the miami indian community

LA 404 Comprehensive Project
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The Miami Indians are the original people of Indiana with a unique language, culture, homeland, and kinship to one another. The Miami Community has undergone dramatic changes within the last 200 years. The dispersion of the Miami people created a negative community change. The goal of this project is to bring about a positive community change through the provision of spaces, places, events, and occasions that facilitate social interaction within the five major Miami population concentration areas of Fort Wayne, Huntington, Wabash, Peru, and Marion, Indiana. The design of the *aašipehkwa waawaalici*, the Seven Pillars, property owned by the tribe will serve as an example of how these spaces will facilitate a positive community change.
"You have made a request of us for our land, which we have already refused... You now ask us for our very beds, for the means of our subsistence"
Chief LeGros to Governor Lewis Cass  Oct. 12, 1826

"I want to drop it here. I want to live here so when I die, I will have a place prepared for me in the other world. I don't care how poor I am here. I want to be pure in heart so when I die, I will have a place prepared for me."
sasakwasia 1873

"Once having been recognized by the congress and government of this union, no one has the right to dissolve us and destroy us as a race, but they have been doing so, and are doing so, and through it all, we have been reduced to a plight which is a reproach upon this nation. America owes us an obligation. We appeal to you now as its head.
Camillus Bundy to President Calvin Coolidge  June 8, 1927
meeh tohseeni wii aanki
we are those who are living

The Miami people call themselves mihtohseeniaki, those who are living. According to Miami traditional stories, they have lived in the southern Great Lakes region since the beginning. Emerging from this area as a people, the Miami have a close kinship to their homeland. It is where keešihwia, the creator, intended them to be. With a way of life spanning thousands of years, everything that is Miami reflects this association with the landscape and all within it. This kinship became threatened with the coming of a dominant culture; Western Society. The community experienced rapid changes.

Community change is the result of social, cultural, and material change. These elements are integrated into a mutually interdependent whole; change in one causes change in the others.*

* Derived from Anthropological Praxis: Translating Knowledge Into Action
**physical change**

The main cause of change to the Miami community was the physical change of the land base. The dramatic loss of the ability to maintain a land base caused social change within the community. Social change is the rearrangements or modifications in the patterns of interaction between people*. Miami people found themselves confined within parameters established by the United States Government through treaty cessions spanning nearly fifty years.

* Derived from *Anthropological Praxis: Translating Knowledge Into Action*
The Treaty of Greenville paved the way for successive treaties rapidly eroding the inherent right of the Miami to continue their established existence. A portion of the tribe was removed on canal boats to Kansas Territory and were later forced to northeastern Oklahoma, where they remain today. This not only divided the tribe physically, but socially and politically as well. Within less than 45 years, the millions of acres utilized by Miami people was reduced to a mere hundreds of acres in small reserves spread throughout the Wabash River Valley of northeastern Indiana. During this time, Miami people adapted to a more sedentary existence while incorporating parts of the dominant society to fit Miami culture and beliefs. During this time, the Miami utilized a wide variety of plant and animal species.

Along the Wabash, Eel, and Mississinewa, the Miami continued the many activities of the annual subsistence cycle, growing fields of corn, beans, squash, some European garden vegetables, and wheat making use of the rich riverine ecosystem with its many soil types and plant and animal environments ranging from wet a marshy on the floodplains to dry on the limestone bluffs and the uplands. Many medicinal plants grew in the mixed soils and microenvironments along the rivers and uplands: goldenseal (yellow root), dog fennel, boneset, yarrow, pennyroyal, bloodroot (pucoon), and sweet flag (calamus) were a few that were commonly used. A great variety of edible foods grew in abundance as
community change

well. There were wild plums, strawberries, grapes, papaws, persimmons, crabapples, and many varieties of berries. The acorn of the bur oak, Indian potatoes, and tubers of the water chinkapin, arrowleaf, and Jerusalem artichoke supplied starch. Common ilkweed, flowers of the mulberry, early shoots of skunk cabbage, sour dock, wild onion, and a number of other plants were prized as greens. Teas were made from pikenard, spicebush, sassafras, and several other plants. Maple sugar and honey were used as sweeteners, as were dried fruits and berries... as the larger meat animals disappeared, the Miami turned increasingly to the rivers as a protein source. Semiaquatic mammals such as mink, river otter, beaver and muskrat still populated the region, as did other small mammals - porcupine, fox squirrel, rabbit woodchuck, and opossum. All were eaten. There were many kinds of fish, which were caught by netting, spearing, hooking, gill grabbing, shooting with bow and arrow, and basket seining at weir dams.

This traditional means of existence came to a halt with the allotment of the communal Meshingomesia Reservation in 1873 and loss of Federal Status as a Sovereign Indian Nation in 1897. Most of the Meshingomesia allotments were lost within a few years to land speculators in the area. Most Meshingomesia Band members were not ready for such a dramatic change of existence. Miami leaders wrote to the United States Government saying:

_a large portion of our people are not self-sustaining, many of them are very poor, intemperate, I improved, and wholly unable to account for the money if they had it... We do know the wants of our people..._

The allotment of the Meshingomesia Reservation was a precursor to what would happen 24 years later. With the loss of federal status, Miami land was subject to taxation. Most Miami could not
afford the taxes and lost the majority of original reserves by the 1920s. This loss of status also meant the Miami could no longer continue many subsistence practices legally. This meant a forced shift in subsistence; a move to the cities. At the turn of the 20th century, most Miami found themselves moving to the nearby cities of Fort Wayne, Huntington, Wabash, Peru, and Marion in search of jobs to support their families (most remain in these cities today). This move to the city and abandonment of the traditional form of communal living dramatically impacted Miami social interaction. No longer were most Miami people able to interact with other Miami on a daily basis. Other factors such as racism and forced assimilation created a loss of identity among the Miami. The Miami language and cultural practices were no longer dominant in the majority of Miami households.

With these losses of land, language, and culture, the Miami held on to their strong kinship ties with one another. Miami people identify themselves within the tribe by their extended family groups. Families such as the Godfroy, Meshingomesia, Richardville, Lafontain, Mongosa, Pimyotamah, Bundy, and others form the sub-communities within the tribe that can be identified with inhabiting one of the major Miami population areas. The interactions among these families groups has developed a rich tribal history of community interaction.

Today, the Miami find themselves coming back together and interacting on a more regular basis. The Miami language is again being spoken by children. In a discussion of the newly formed Language Committee, it was pointed out that the only way a language is to survive is if it has life, and the only thing that can give it life is a
community change

community. Forming a stronger community interaction will enable for the return of Miami language and cultural practices.
social change

Prior to 1812, major decision making, such as land sales, resulted from the compromised decisions of village chiefs and war chiefs. Village chiefs dealt with the internal affairs within the village, while war chiefs usually functioned only in times of war, and were usually the spokespersons for the tribe.

Prior to 1830(?) the Miami social structure was made up of clans. Miami people were born into an assigned clan and assumed that clans community responsibilities as well as their specific function within the clan.

After there was no longer the need for war chiefs, village chiefs and later the representatives of extended family groups, often called clans by the Miami, decision making is made by the council of representatives. Each extended family has its own distinct geographic location and history.
Material change is the change in the physical characteristics of the community, i.e. structural types, clothing*. These changes were adaptations due to the loss of the land base and the abandonment of the previous semi-sedentary lifestyle. This type of construction still remains in the use of ceremonial structures within the community.

The term *apahkwikaani*, mat house, is due to the covering of the wiikiami (house) with cattail reed mats, *apahkwayaki*. The advantage to this type of construction is that they make for easy transport. The construction of these was usually left to the women of the community, who could build one by bending saplings of such trees as the *ceecinkilakaahkw*, the shell-bark hickory, to form the frame, the carefully woven mats of apahkwaya were then placed on the interior and exterior for protection of the elements. This type of lodging was used mainly during the autumn and winter months. Currently this type of construction is utilized only for the *kinoonteewi*, the community ceremonial structure used for the longhouse ceremony four times per year. During the warmer months, the *niipinwikesi wiiktami* was used. This was a gabled structure made of sapling poles. Scaffolds similar to this were used until the 1940s for drying *myaamia miincip*, Miami corn.

* Derived from *Anthropological Praxis: Translating Knowledge Into Action*
peepakaakišikaani (house of flat boards)

The term peepakaakišikaani, house of flat boards was utilized early by Miami people since probably the early 19th century. Since the Miami were no longer able to carry out a means of semi-sedentary subsistence due to the confinement within reserve areas, they found themselves adapting to a more permanent type of structure, the log cabin. Influential Miami leader, Gabriel Godfroy, lived in what was originally his father, Francis Godfroy’s trading post cabin, which can be seen to the right in the structure. Godfroy later added on to the structure in the style of the times. Being the charismatic person that he was, often Miami children would visit at nights on the porch and the yard to hear him tell traditional Miami stories. The Godfroy and Pimyotamah houses are illustrative of the type of structures inhabited by influential tribal leaders of the time, the large sizes were mostly to accommodate large gatherings of Miami people within. The John Newman cabin is illustrative of the typical Miami cabin of the reservation period, being mostly one roomed. These were mostly clustered together.
Material Change

peepakaakiškaani (house of flat boards)

house of Peter Godfroy

waapinkweeta awiiki ("bachelors" house)

house of Oliver Godfroy

ahki (farm)

farm of Clarence Godfroy c. 1960

These structural and living pattern types were adapted later into the early 20th century. Most Miami within the Peru area still lived on or near the remaining fragments of their reserve lands. At this time Miami men's roles were changing due to the heavy influence of American culture. At this point in time they began to assume non-traditional roles, such as that of the farmer, before, this role was assumed by women, whose roles changed less dramatically.
Cultural change is defined as the change at the cognitive or ideational level that is generally distributed throughout the community*. This area is difficult to analyze since it is intangible and ever-changing. Many Miami beliefs, practices, and concepts have been replaced by that of the predominant society.

* Derived from *Anthropological Praxis: Translating Knowledge Into Action*
The current majority population of Miami people lies within northeastern Indiana. The main area of interaction within the community takes place within the Peru sub-community. The five major concentration areas are within a one half hour drive from the next, allowing for possibilities of the development of spaces within each area to create a dynamic community interaction between the five sub-communities.
project goals

The Miami Indian community has experienced a negative change due to social, material, and cultural changes. The goal of this project is to bring about a positive community change.

creating a positive community change

socially the changing of patterns of interaction between people
by creating places and spaces for increased social interaction among tribal members. These places will be within the five major Miami sub-communities of Fort Wayne, Huntington, Wabash, Peru, and Marion.

materially the changing of the physical characteristics of the community
by designing these places to change the physical characteristics of the community by the integration of traditional Miami architecture along with the use of modern materials that reflect the functionality and meanings of traditional Miami architecture.

culturally the changing of the ideational level of the community
by integrating Miami cultural beliefs and concepts to change the cognitive or ideational level of the community by making them more aware of traditional Miami beliefs regarding the physical and spiritual worlds and a Miami person’s place among all things, all their relations.
The creation of places within the five major Miami sub-communities will create increased patterns of interaction between tribal members. As it currently exists, the majority of social interaction occurs within the Peru sub-community. With events and occasions occurring within each of these spaces throughout the year, Miami people within the major sub-communities will be more able to participate in social interaction with other Miami people. Since these sub-communities are already identified with certain family groups, these places will also become associated with the respective family groups, with each family assuming identity with the places within their areas. These places will be respectful to the cultural and historical significance of each area to these families and to all Miami people.
The design of these places will change the physical characteristics of the community by utilizing traditional Miami architectural forms and functions while utilizing "traditional" materials and modern materials where appropriate.
cultural change

Miami cultural concepts reflect their views of the physical and spiritual worlds and their place within these. It is important to reintroduce these concepts to all Miami people in order for them to connect to their past, present, and future.

nimehšoomena
our grandfather

Miami relations to physical and spiritual worlds
Miami people believe they are related to all things. All things are referred to in terms of kinship.

noolkomena
our grandmother
cultural change spatial organization

youth those who respect

north

south

age those who are respected
cultural change  directional associations

pipoonahkionki

peeKishinki  awansapinki

maayaahkweeconki

The clockwise movement through space reflects the Miami concepts of the cyclical associations with life. Entry is always from the east, where the sun rises and life begins.

There are many things associated with the four cardinal directions in Miami culture, it directs ceremonial events and represents the cycles of the day and the seasons; the cycles of life. These directional associations can be seen in traditional Miami clothing patterns to the left.
site issues

Since the topic of this project deals with such a broad area, a specific focus area will be dealt with. The focus will be the design of a 36 acre parcel of land within the Peru sub-community currently owned by the Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana. This site was chosen due to it being under the ownership of the tribe and its cultural and historical significance to Miami people. The tribe wishes to have the design built.

client description

The users of these spaces include all enrolled members of the Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana and enrolled members of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and the Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma as well. These spaces may also be available for educational opportunities as well to non-Miami people. The Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana currently has 4,500 enrolled tribal members, with the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and the Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma having 2,500 enrolled members each. The majority of users will be those enrolled members of the Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana due to their close proximity.

assumptions

It will be assumed that the Miami Indian community wants to create a positive community change for the betterment of all Miami people; present and future.
cultural and historical significance

The house of Francis Godfroy and later his son, Gabriel, is built upon the original location of Francis Godfroy's trading post. This is only a few miles from the Seven Pillars site. The house represents a rich history to the Miami people. Francis Godfroy (palonswa) was the last war chief of the nation. He was an influential tribal leader that spoke French, English and Miami. He received many land grants from the government and allowed many landless Miami to live upon these. His son, Gabriel, also assumed tribal leadership, leading successful lawsuits against the state of Indiana for illegal taxation of Miami lands. His yard was constantly filled with Miami children listening to his telling of traditional Miami stories. This charismatic leader, however, died virtually penniless in 1910, due to the loss of Miami Federal Status. The nearby cemetery has been in use since the early 1800s and continues to be used exclusively by Miami people, namely Godfroy family members.
cultural and historical significance

Deaf Man’s village was the home of mahkoonsakwa, little bear woman, who was also known as Frances Slocum. She was the daughter of Quakers from England who had settled in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania. She was taken captive as a child by the Delaware and found herself married to the Miami war chief šiipaahkana, awl, also known as deaf man. It was here that mahkoonsakwa’s family remained on their reserve. One of her daughters, oonseenśinkwa, married Peter Bundy, who was an influential Miami leader and Baptist preacher. The Bundy family is among one of the largest historically influential Miami families. Camillus Bundy, pimyotama, remained upon the last remnant of the reserve until the Aetna Insurance Company foreclosed the mortgage on his 113-acre farm in 1921. After this, it was at the family cemetery that Camillus and several other Miami lived in tents, Camillus was later imprisoned for malicious trespassing. Bundy asserted Miami land claims until his death. Later, in the 1960s, the Army Corps of Engineers decided to create the Mississenewa Dam in order to control flooding along the Wabash, namely in Peru. The creation of this flooded many important Miami sites along the river, including the Slocum/Bundy cemetery. It was later moved to its present location. Miami people associated with this family continue to be buried here today.
Osage Village is located less than a mile from the seven pillars site. The village, being named after Osage, who was an Osage Indian living with the Miami, is the site of an historical meeting that took place where the Miami council refused to join the confederacy of the Shawnee leader, Tecumseh. It is said that Tecumseh had met the council at this site. This village is said to have been the largest Indian village in the state of Indiana at the time.
This is just one of the several houses once owned by Chief Jean Baptiste Richardville, *pinšiwa*. The son of a French trader of nobility and tahkamwa, the sister of the influential Miami leader *pakana*, Richardville was perfectly comfortable among the French traders and Miami as well. He knew that Miami land would inevitably be swallowed up by the Americans and tried in every way to secure as much land as he could, allowing landless Miami people to live on these reserves that were scattered throughout northeast Indiana. Although Richardville was multilingual, he later refused to speak nothing but the Miami language. The current principal chief of the Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana is a descendant of Richardville. The house was built by the United States Government under treaty provisions. It is located next to the site of the Osage Village.
The term *aašipehkwa waawaalic* means "caves in the cliff". This limestone outcropping was created by years of scouring action from the *namacihsinwi siiptiwi*, the Mississinewa River. This site represents a connection to a part of the original landscape given to Miami people by the Creator for Miami people. It is a place of connection to their past, present, future, and to the physical and spiritual worlds. The property has only been out of Miami ownership for 20 years. The tribe saw an opportunity to buy the property in the early 1990s. Since then, it has provided for the reviving of the longhouse ceremony and other events that bring the community together. Older Miami people visit this site and tell many stories about their experiences at this place. It is a place held deep in the hearts of all Miami people.
The site comprises of 36 acres located within a five minute drive from the Miami Tribal Center located in downtown Peru where shower and other facilities are available to tribal members. It is within one and one half hours driving distance from the farthest area of Miami population concentration (Fort Wayne). The site itself is part of what originally was the Tahkanong Reserve and is etirely wooded with the exception of a small cleared area at the entrance to the site where parking, camping, and game activities take place. There is an enormous amount of topography on the site, with the tallest elevation being nearly 95 feet higher than the river. This poses opportunities and constraints upon usage of the site.

The Seven Pillars is located within a rural context. Being surrounded by agricultural fields, the Mississinewa River and the adjacent Seven Pillars Nature Preserve.

The Seven Pillars contains a dramatic amount of topography, it also contains four soil types that indicate uses, vegetation, and suitability for the site.
aasipehkwa waawaalicin

view from boat launch looking east
it is important to preserve these views

view looking south along stream that traverses site. Much of the stream has been dredged, it is important to restore the stream bed and its vegetation to lessen amounts of runoff and eroded sediments into the nearby river.

view from boat launch looking west

view of community ceremonial longhouse the structure reflects traditional Miami architecture and uses materials from the site.

design process
aαςιpehκwa ωaαwaαalicι

view from entry to site looking west. From here, the Seven Pillars Nature Preserve can be seen along with the Mississinewa River to the right. The agricultural area can be utilized for parking facilities for the site.

view from entry to Seven Pillars. It is important to preserve this view while discouraging trespassers or would-be vandals to the site. Some type of non-invasive fencing and signage may be utilized for this.
cultural and historical significance

The site has been continually used by Miami people for hundreds of years, with that, an enormous amount of history is associated with the site. Along with this history is the amount of knowledge of the natural areas and process of the area. This can be seen in the numerous historical subsistence practices that have been implemented here. Many of these practices are now illegal for Miami people to continue since they no longer have federal Indian status and are subject to the game laws of the state of Indiana. The site is also currently used by tribal members for hunting various animals, such as deer, rabbit, and squirrels, along with fishing. Tribal members would like to continue practicing this at the site with as little disturbance to the wildlife and their habitats as possible.

Miami description terms of area

iikhkipisinonki
straight place
Peru

waapaahšiki siipiwi
bright white river
wabash river

namachihsinwi siipiwi
slanting river
mississinewa river

aašipehkwa waawaalici
caves in the cliff
seven pillars

tahkananka reserve
knot hole in tree
Tahkanong reserve
Current features and uses of site

Parking/camping area

Cooking/social gathering area

Ceremonial longhouse

Community ceremonies
- Longhouse ceremony
- Ahsapa Tawaani (lacrosse)
- Myaamia Paaskoontia (Miami football)
- Waapinaahkia Paaskoontia (Delaware football)
- Dances

Personal ceremonies
- Myaamia Maawipyaayaanki
- Annual Miami homecoming week

Long camp
Weddings
Hunting
Fishing
Plant harvesting
Nature walks
**natural zones**

- **riparian zone**
The riparian zone is characterized by spectacular views of the Seven Pillars and wildlife such as herons and other waterfowl. The relative flatness of the area allows for easy access to river from rest of site.

- **flood plain zones**
These areas are characterized by relatively flat topography. The soil types limit the construction of permanent structures with foundations and for septic fields. These areas can be utilized for areas requiring larger amounts of space for community gatherings.

- **stream zone**
This area is characterized by a meandering stream that bisects the site. Nearly half of the original stream bed on the site has been disturbed due to dredging because of flooding on the site. There is a need for restoration of this stream along with flood control measures, possibly the creation of a small earthen dam.

- **upland zones**
The upland zones are characterized by extreme changes in topography. Trail systems within these areas are badly eroded and are in need of new alternatives. High points provide spectacular views out of and within the site. These areas can be built upon for overlook purposes.

*design process*
community charrette results

Preliminary list of community wants and needs for the site:

- non-park like aesthetic
- reflect more "traditional architecture"
- ceremonial plant introduction
- wildlife habitat preservation
- stream restoration
- erosion control
- signage reflecting importance of place
- teaching ourselves history, culture, language, etc.
- need for parking
- picnic/shelter area
- reunion area
- dance area
- permanent longhouse
- meeting place
- natural looking paved surfaces
- handicapped accessibility
- trails
- seating
- security
- water accessibility

A community charrette was held March 15, 2000 at the Miami Nation of Indians of Indiana Tribal Center located in Peru, Indiana. About 25 people attended, representing the tribal council and other community members, such as the Cultural Committee Chair and a representative from the local NRCS. It was found that the community values this site immensely and would like to provide a great number of opportunities upon the site for the betterment of all Miami people. The community also expressed a concern for the least amount of impact possible upon the site in order to maintain its natural integrity while also providing needed opportunities for tribal members. It is seen as a place of gathering and a place of learning that can provide a connection for tribal members to their past, present, and future and to the plants and animals the creator placed for Miami people for the means of their subsistence.

*This preliminary list of wants and needs were taken into account while developing the site master plan. Not all of these were dealt with in this project.
master plan

○ parking

○ eehi paahpiaanki
  *where we play*

○ eehi maawipyayaanki
  *where we gather*

○ eehi neeminki
  *where dancing is*

○ kinoonteewi *longhouse*

○ noosikaani *sweat lodge*

○ nipihsi *pond*

○ personal ceremonial space

○ eehi kiilhsoohki
  kiilhwataminki
  *where moons are read*

n
300 ft

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In developing the site entry, the community expressed the need for a type of fencing that would merely serve as an entry way into the site. Since the site is accessible to anyone from the river right-of-way, no barrier would serve the purpose to keep people out. The community wanted something that would not say “THIS IS OUR LAND, KEEP OUT”, but state the importance of the site and ask for any visitor to please give it the same respect as the Miami people. The fencing reflects traditional forms of fencing of stick driven into the ground, however, it consists of a more permanent reinforcement bar that allows vines to grow upon them, thus creating a translucent green wall that directs the view toward the Seven Pillars, directly across the river.
A closer view of the entry into the site allows for the easy viewing into the site. The signage accompanying it is typical of all signage within the five sub-community areas dealt with in this project, along with all historically and culturally significant Miami places within Indiana. This allows for the Miami people to tell their own story in their own words and allow for non-Miami people to see the significance that the landscape of Indiana has within the hearts of the Miami people.

example of signage for the site
From the community charrette results, the design of site structures should reflect more upon the traditional forms of Miami architecture, while use modern materials for permanence. In looking at traditional architectural forms and materials, it was found that steel reinforcement bar best reflected the traditional bent-sapling construction techniques. The reinforcement bar is relatively inexpensive, while providing a needed permanence and also has the ability to have the thinness and bendability reflective of tree saplings. The structure also has a roof for shelter an internal fire place and seating along the perimeter, all reflective of this traditional architecture and its functionality. This structure provides for such activities as weddings, family and tribal reunions, classes, feasting, and the viewing of games in the nearby game space.

The southern side of the shelter provides an outdoor cooking area along with seating and more space for picnic tables in order to accommodate for larger gatherings within the space.

traditional and modern materials
koteewi fire place

The design of the internal fireplace of the shelter reflects Miami cultural views. As one enters the shelter from the east, a limestone paver set in the floor directs the visitor to the fire and around in a clockwise motion, the interior stones are naturally colored to represent Miami directional colors. The floor itself is an earth colored concrete made to resemble a tamped earthen floor. Culturally significant plant species have been stamped into the concrete.

ahsapa tawaani lacrosse

Since open space on this site is limited, the existing open space was utilized for the development of a game space. Such games as Miami Lacrosse, Miami football, and Delaware football can be played within this space. This can also be used for larger gatherings of Miami people for such things as camping and the Miami Indian Reunion, which has occurred since 1903.
Trails throughout the site connect important site features and amenities while also providing a wide range of recreational and educational opportunities.
handicapped accessible trails

The integration of handicapped accessible trails within the society is seen as a necessity by the community. It allows for older Miami people to experience the site along with their children and grandchildren. This experience can provide needed educational opportunities that interpretive signage alone cannot provide. Culturally significant plant species are planted along these trails to further educational opportunities as well. The surfaces of these trails provide a natural looking surface while providing the needed safety for wheelchair accessibility.

tahkokaani bridge

bridge allows for easy access from entry area to dance grounds and pond

river ramp

to allow for access to the river, a trail has been cut into the bank at an 8:1 slope.
culturally significant plant species
examples:

ahseema
(Nicotiana rustica)
wild tobacco
Uses: ceremonial and medicinal

peeitihsaki
(Gnaphalium obtusifolium)
sweet everlasting
Uses: ceremonial

Culturally significant plant species will be reintroduced to the site. This will provide many opportunities to the Miami community. The Miami believe that these plants are gifts from the creator for them to use. These plants have a wide variety of uses. One of these such uses is the utilitarian use of plant species. These uses include many types for the use in creating traditional Miami crafts and lodge coverings. The ceremonial uses range from the actual use of the plant in ceremony or the creation of ceremonial objects from these. The medicinal uses of these plants are also widely used. Another use is for that of food. The Miami people utilized a wide variety of plant types for their means of subsistence, Many of these uses of plants are still in existence among modern Miami people. With the reintroduction of these plant species, more will become used again for their original purposes.
nipihsi pond

earthen dam is made of glacial erratics from the site to create a six foot deep pool that provides habitat for culturally significant plant species. The dam itself also acts as a bridge that connects site trail systems.

noosikaani sweatlodge

The creation of the earthen dam provides many opportunities to the community. While controlling flooding on the site, the pool created by the dam also provides a wetland habitat for culturally significant plants and for use after the sweatlodge ceremony. The noosikaani is an important cultural practice the community wishes to practice on the site. The ceremony provides for a connection of Miami people to the spiritual world and also provides for an opportunity of social interaction among tribal members. The harvesting of the culturally significant plants is also a community event, involving many people in the harvesting and preparation of plants for utilitarian, ceremonial, and edible use.
The design of the dance grounds reflect Miami cultural concepts and allow for social interaction among tribal members. This space allows for dances to take place for all occasions and can accommodate nearly 100 people. The nearby longhouse sits upon a plateau overlooking the dance ground and the river. This also allows for people to sit upon the plateau and view the activities within the dance ground. The seating is made of limestone reflective of the nearby pillars, the northeast area is mounded to provide seating, while preserving the view to the adjacent river below.

The longhouse ceremony draws the largest number of Miami people for ceremony. This takes place four times per year in respect to the seasons. The community wishes to establish a more permanent longhouse made of logs. This type of structure is expensive and labor intensive, while the more traditional form can utilize materials from the site and can be constructed with relative ease within a matter of days. This type of structure can be used until the community has the means of providing the more permanent log structure.
This space is already utilized by Miami people for personal ceremonial purposes. It provides views to the river flood plain below while allowing for privacy due to its location on a peninsula area. A new trail has been added to allow for easier accessibility to the site. The addition of a stone from the site provides for seating for use in a personal ceremony or for viewing the river. The seat also has an area carved to collect rain water that can be used during ceremony if the individual wishes.
This space provides for such community activities as craft classes, storytelling, and language classes. A trail traverses through the space that contains bronze medallions depicting Miami moons. Each moon reflects natural occurrences for that month, such as the *mahkoonsa kiilhswa*, the young bear moon (March). This is the moon in which the young bears emerge from the dens with their mothers. This is the beginning of the year for Miami people. At each of the four directions, a view is created that makes the visitor aware of their relation to the four directions within the space. This is further enhanced by the directional colors. Located upon a plateau, the space also provides for views to the stream below.
The Miami Indian community has undergone dramatic changes within the last 200 years. The physical change of the loss of the Miami land base created negative social, cultural, and material change to the community. Through the creation of spaces within the five major Miami sub-communities, a positive community change will occur to create a stronger, healthier community capable of sustaining Miami identity and culture well into the future.


