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The forecast in landscape architecture as we plan for 2016

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Wow what a year 2015 has been here in New England! Throughout this economic uptick, William Fleming Associates has been fortunate enough to work with many great clients and some of the best commercial developers throughout New England. As with many professions, landscape architecture is experiencing a resurgence in development project's because our client's needs to meet a new goal - a green goal. WFA has been a part of this evolving profession for over 30 years and at no other time has this been seen as so challenging as the upcoming problems we are facing. Consumers are more educated on environmental issues and taking them more seriously and these values will be important as the national merchants are becoming 'green' to match this goal. Our growth over the past decade along with the economic downturn has put tremendous pressure on our landscapes both suburban and rural. In order to develop centers for commerce in these underdeveloped areas we constructed the infrastructure to service these new locations of human activity. Incrementally our clients have financed many necessary city/town improvements from sewer, water, traffic and addressed neighborhood problems including an increased tax base. Therefore, skills of environmental design professionals will become increasingly valuable for all communities. The building industry professionals are working diligently to achieve a balance of thoughtful and profitable green projects!

As we look to 2016, after a couple of resurgent economic years, we are confronted with the absolute need for innovation. Americans if nothing else are entrepreneurs! Everyone, of our clients is an innovator, explorer and to a certain extent are calculated risk takers. The new Financial Engineering that can best build the new infrastructure is the "x" in the equation. The "x" of financings equation is how to identify the ongoing value of savings to the end using tenants and the community at large and how profitable sustainable design/the LEED process is to our clients, during the entire life of a project. Being a landscape architect and a practicing architect it always seemed logical to embrace a sustainable design process. We have worked to incorporate low impact design/rain garden/roof garden systems to increase energy efficiency and environmental quality. Now that the firm is LEED-NC-AP, building the future is about the bottom line, how to confront growing costs of energy and to improve quality of life at the same time.

Boston is at a moment in time where they can seriously think about the future on many different social, economic and infrastructure issues as we have already begun this process during our bid for the 2024 Olympic Bid. Quite frankly all these issues have been kicked down the street for years and we need to plan for the future and build upon the visioning/planning for the future that has occurred and is needed more than ever with the expanding population! Many of these important systems have been accomplished without breaking the bank. WFA suggests further incremental inclusion of a few of these green building ideas so in time our clients can bank the results. The verification of these green building system tests is in the cost savings. Design professionals are working diligently

to incorporate the Sustainable Solutions and identify the results. Our culture has been shocked into a world of conservation. The automobile industry leaders are now obsessed with efficiency, as the electric/hybrid car is in our shopping center parking lots. Flat roofs will be vegetated, pitched roofs with photovoltaic/solar panels will use sun energy to heat the hot water, run automatic building systems and to re-energize customer's electric cars! The best innovators and entrepreneurs (our clients) are ready to meet the smart growth, integrated developments and other multi-use prototypes that will yield the "quality of life" desired by the public.

All of the above innovations came to fruition thru years of trial and error so as Boston plans for the future, I ask them to plan for 2050! As we all know too well the future will be here before you know it!

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