Environmentally intelligent building design and urban planning are crucial to the world’s future.

Van Meter Williams Pollack is an award-winning Architecture and Urban Design firm based in San Francisco and Denver. Since 1989 we have provided a full range of comprehensive design and planning services for a variety of project types, scales and clients. The partners and staff bring their knowledge and expertise to all aspects and phases of our projects.

VMWP’s comprehensive and innovative design approach considers environmental, social, economic, and client needs to create buildings and communities that resonate with people. From small towns grappling with pressures of sprawl, to major urban centers requiring infill and redevelopment, one of our strengths is the ability to work in the variety of communities that make up diverse, growing regions.

OUR PRINCIPLES

- **meet** the unique requirements of every client
- **engage** the communities in which we live and work
- **work** within the realities of economic constraints
- **create** the highest quality design and planning
- **commit** to sustainable design principles in all planning & design

Van Meter Williams Pollack’s Architecture and Urban Design projects emphasize pedestrian and transit-oriented development patterns that serve a community’s economic, social and cultural needs. Our success in master planning, community design, mixed-use developments, and revitalizing urban infill sites demonstrates that there are alternatives to the outward expansion of cities, towns and suburbs. High-density urban infill, transit-oriented development, and pedestrian-focused streetscapes support sustainable development.

We have advanced economically viable plans that address transportation and infrastructure, community development, population growth and diversity, historic preservation, and sustainable growth patterns to a wide range of clients throughout the United States. Our greatest assets are an understanding of land use patterns, development types, and appropriate pedestrian environments for each community; our commitment to an open, clear, and direct process; and our ability to implement a community vision.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Mixed-use projects connect communities and create pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods where people can drive less and use resources more efficiently. The right mix, concentration and placement of uses can spark a neighborhood’s identity. VMWP specializes in designing projects that combine living, working, shopping and leisure, within one shared environment. Access to local necessities invites people to walk more, drive less, brings life to the street, and supports both business and the environment.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Infill development presents an opportunity to transform underused urban areas into inviting public realms. Responsive infill gives a place new life, making it more functional, exciting, beautiful and sustainable, while at the same time preserving its character and history.
Our aim is to create straightforward, comfortable spaces, using good design and intimate scale to evoke a unique sense of renewal. Projects as diverse as the Rail Yard Lofts in Denver and 55 Laguna in San Francisco highlight our approach to infill development.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

We plan, design and build a wide variety of affordable housing from high-density urban communities to small-lot single-family housing. Our work has received numerous design awards in national and local design competitions. Most recently, our St. Joseph’s project was awarded the 2017 CNU Charter Award and the 2015 ULI Global Award for Excellence. As cost and quality of life are primary concerns in our housing, we use simple elements of construction, building materials and scale to create beautiful spaces.

**DEVELOPMENT FEASIBILITY**

We specialize in quick, comprehensive studies to assess the layout and feasibility of development opportunities. Our practical understanding of the economic and implementation issues involved lays a firm foundation for all of our projects. VMWP’s architects and urban designers bring in-depth experience and knowledge of development prototypes, project phasing and implementation techniques to this process.

**COMMUNITY PROCESS**

Community involvement is essential to any project’s success. As part of our commitment to community design, we promote the active participation of a variety of stakeholders in the planning process. We work with both market rate and non-profit, community-based developers and jurisdictions to ensure that this participation is an inclusive, efficient, effective and (most of all) fun process. VMWP has developed an engaging community participation model that effectively uncovers the needs and concerns of future residents and the surrounding neighborhood. This approach also elicits community-driven alternatives, which facilitate consensus on design and other community issues. Often, the most important discussions are not about technical issues, but instead revolve around “concern with change,” or concern for creating a “sense of place.”

**TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT**

Our transit-oriented projects combine mixed-use and infill development with pedestrian-friendly streets close to public transportation. These comprehensive plans create lively villages that inspire people to buy locally, use more public transit and drive less. Our TOD projects have included land use plans and urban design guidelines, master plans for new mass transit station areas, and infill visions for park-and-ride lots. VMWP works with municipalities to develop implementation strategies as well as guidelines with which to evaluate development proposals.

**MASTER PLANNING & SPECIFIC DESIGN**

VMWP’s master planning experience includes plans for new town centers, neighborhoods, mixed-use urban infill and redevelopment projects. Our pedestrian-oriented approach to master planning and urban design creates a dynamic urban environment. Corridor planning and streetscape projects range in scale from land use and design analysis along regional thoroughfares and local networks, to local commercial streetscape designs focused on improving the pedestrian experience and the commercial viability of districts and neighborhoods.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

We build on the best qualities of a place to strengthen and enhance the existing character of a neighborhood, a street corridor, or an entire city. The process of setting such standards is a crucial way for a community to transform its vision into a reality, while creating an invaluable tool to both shape and accommodate a city’s future. VMWP has written guidelines and created development prototypes for single and multi-family residential development, neighborhood commercial centers, large-scale new development, and transit villages.

**STREETScape DESIGN**

Great streets happen when pedestrians, cars and bicycles all get along. Our streetscape projects focus on making streets more comfortable to walk and gather, and better connected to a variety of retail districts and neighborhoods. When there are inviting places to sit, linger and enjoy private or social time, people feel more connected to their communities.
We celebrate cities. We believe in them. That’s why we’re so passionate about making them more livable.

**SUSTAINABILITY: FROM REGION TO BUILDING**

Sustainable design means satisfying the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the needs of future ones. Our use of technology, creativity and strategic planning help us to conserve resources, build communities, and express the interconnectedness of people and their physical surroundings. We strive to create places that enhance the environment and are worthy of affection.

**GREEN DESIGN ON THE REGIONAL SCALE**

- Regional Planning: Visionary planning for future urban growth and conservation of open space.
- Greenways: Connected open space corridors for recreation and/or conservation.
- Urban Growth Boundaries: Growth management policy tools that establish boundaries around towns or metropolitan areas and discourage development outside of them.
- Policies and Initiatives: Programs developed by municipalities and other organizations towards a more sustainable way of life, one that safeguards and enhances local resources, prevents harm to the natural environment and human health, and strengthens the community and local economy.

**GREEN BUILDING ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE**

- Street Connectivity: Provides drivers, walkers and bikers with multiple direct routes, creating pedestrians a more attractive environment where people want to drive less.
- Transit-Oriented Development: Significant development within walking distance of transit stations means that greenfields on the urban fringe can be preserved as open space.
- Green Street Design: Green streets mimic natural conditions by managing runoff and pollutants and add to urban beautification.
- Complete Streets: Mix of pedestrian, bicycle and automobiles

**GREEN BUILDING ON THE SITE SCALE**

- Site Planning: Sustainable Site Design
- Water Management: Conservation and Mitigation
- Energy: Efficient and Energy Producing
- Materials: Conservation of Resources and use of Sustainable Products
- Health: Indoor Environmental Quality

**TOOLS USED TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS**

- Environmental Goals Collaborative Charrette
- VMWP Green Checklist
- Design Team with LEED Accredited Professionals & Green Point Raters
- VMWP’s Integrated Design Process and Project Delivery