

# THE IV<sup>TH</sup> REPORT

## "TEST (of) TIME" - REAL LIFE SUSTAINABILITY

### QUOTES

Daniel J. Roarty, AIA, LEED® AP

#### TO NOTE

*"We shape our buildings, thereafter they shape us."*

Winston Churchill



Brown County Courthouse - 1911  
C. E. Bell, Architect



Brown County Library—1972  
James P. Schlueter, Architect (BSA)



211 N. Broadway—2001  
Daniel J. Roarty, Architect (Dimension IV)



GBBG Children's Rest Station—2012  
Dimension IV, Architects (Proposed)

Rachel Carson, writer, scientist and ecologist, published her ground breaking book *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book sparked a national debate on the use of pesticides and led to the ban of DDT. By 1970, former Wisconsin U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson was able to capitalize "on the emerging consciousness" and put "environmental concerns front and center"<sup>1</sup>. Nelson founded Earth Day as April 22; thereby marking the birth of the environmental movement and the "sustainability" discussion. Today, sustainability is a mantra for not only environmentalists, but also educators, policy makers, businesses, commerce, designers and the general population.

The efforts of environmentalists over the past 40 plus years has created a conscious connection of sustainability and environmental protection. But "sustainability" at the most basic level ultimately must be an economic discussion. Sustainability is the ability to maintain, at a minimum, a "zero sum" balance. (And the best sustainable efforts produce a positive sum balance.) Real life sustainability (and Earth Day "success") is illustrated in buildings that "Stand the Test of Time". Note that the pivotal "balance" in sustainability occurs at the beginning of a project when budget and cost are balanced. Projects never built, never "sit for the exam".

The "test of time" is administered by nature, location and the human condition. Buildings that "stand the test of time" have several, if not all, of the following "passing grades":

1. Continued use (unused buildings are eventually razed or become "ruins" - relics, landmarks or archeological museum pieces).
2. Durable/effective materials and systems (repair and ease of operation).
3. Cost effectiveness (energy usage, maintenance, access and flexibility).
4. Appropriate location.
5. Aesthetically pleasing; culturally reflective and/or historically significant.
6. Uniqueness (special use or difficult replication).
7. Good Fortune (free from catastrophe—weather, earthquake, fire, war).

Buildings are singular "products". The location is "permanent", the purchase can be an appreciating asset/investment (not a "sunk cost") and the cost of operation must be balanced continually against the benefits accrued. In the immediate Green Bay area, the [Brown County Courthouse](#) (100 years) has completed a major restoration and the [Brown County Library](#) (40 years) is preparing for a major renovation and expansion. Both have withstood the test of time. Both are stellar examples of sustainability. In the future, [211 N. Broadway](#) (10 years) and the proposed [Green Bay Botanical Garden Children's Rest Station](#) should also join these ranks.

There are more buildings that "stand the test of time". Weigh in with your candidates to [djroarty@dimension-iv.com](mailto:djroarty@dimension-iv.com).

<sup>1</sup> From [www.earthday.org](http://www.earthday.org)

TO SIGN UP FOR  
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