

SAM USLE
Designer



Sam Usle is a Designer with Michael Watkins Architect, LLC, an urban design and architecture firm dedicated to designing and implementing a walkable, lasting, and beautiful public realm that fosters community. The firm's work includes the preparation of master plans for towns, neighborhoods and hamlets, revitalization and extension plans for existing communities, preparation of design guidelines, various town architect services for new and existing communities, and leading and participating in urban design charrettes. The firm serves as the Town Architect for Norton Commons in Louisville, Ky. and other communities in, Louisiana, South Carolina, Ohio, and elsewhere. The firm has collaborated with other New Urbanist firms, among them: Torti Gallas + Partners, Placemakers, Urban Design Associates, and the Prince's Foundation for Building Community.

As an urban designer, Usle brings talents acquired from experience in theme park & resort design, to the field of urban design, to assist in the master planning process. He applies drawing, illustration and modeling as planning tools; to rapidly propose and engage with design ideas in three-dimensions. Usle also helps to contribute to the character and sense of place of new settlements, using his background as a plein-air watercolor artist and thematic set designer to imbue urban civic spaces with meaning.

In 2017, Usle earned a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Following graduation, he went to work for Walt Disney Imagineering as a show set designer, being promoted to a Creative Concept Designer in 2019 for his contributions to "blue-sky" international theme park & resort projects. In 2023 Usle earned a Master of Architectural Design & Urbanism degree from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend Indiana, where he completed his studies as the graduate class's valedictorian of the School of Architecture. Through his work designing sets inspired by the great cities of the world, and his travels and studies across the United States, Europe & East-Asia, Sam has developed a passion for the meaningful spatial quality of traditional urban settlement.