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## A PARK WITH BRIDGES

### “MURGAUENPARK” FRAUENFELD, SWITZERLAND

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**Cultivated Debate:** Close to the town of Frauenfeld in the canton Thurgau (north-east Switzerland) the fluvial landscape around the small Murg river was used by the army as a training area for a long time. Later abandoned, it became a forgotten piece of land with growing bushes and trees, a paradise for birds and rascals. As usual, in the 1990<sup>es</sup> suddenly some people saw the chance to use the wasteland as an industrial estate. But there arose some opposition: it was mainly Architect Thomas Hasler who proposed the local authorities to transform the 44'000 m<sup>2</sup> of land between national highway and the city of Frauenfeld into an attractive public park. Therefore it was a private initiative and a lot of promoting discussions which led to the realization of the Murgauenpark, achieved finally in summer 2015. Architect Hasler had set up a team which comprised a landscape architect, hydraulic engineers as well as a bridge engineer. A system of hills, temporary flooded valleys, promenades and bridges form the infrastructure of a new artificial landscape.

The most important part in the design of the bridges was the search for the right position of their abutments and pillars, respecting existing trees and their roots. Within these requirements, the most succinct structures were aimed at. Continuous slender post-tensioned concrete frames are covered by a robust larch timber walkway. As a consequence of the search for simplicity, rainwater falls through the walkway directly to the ground. To obtain an integral structure, there are no abutments. The bridges end with invisible concrete cantilevers reaching small embankments. The transition between the wooden planks and the adjacent road pavement is formed by a small in-situ concrete plate. The short end pillars are provided with concrete hinges at their base avoiding excessive constraints. Architecturally, the bridges subordinate in large curved forms to the alignment of the promenades. The combination of rough, almost untreated materials like concrete, wooden planks and the transparent balustrades in stainless steel integrate the bridges into their carefully shaped natural environment.

Today, the Murgauenpark has become very popular. The synthesis of landscape architecture, renaturalization of waterways (including restoring some of the original flora and fauna), architectural impacts like a multi-purpose pavillon and the slow traffic trail system attract pedestrians, bikers, stroller, playing children or quiet observers equally. Its rather unique history and character received broad attention.

Architects: Astrid Staufer und Thomas Hasler, dipl. Arch. ETH/SIA/BSA, Frauenfeld, Switzerland

Landscape architect: Martin Klauser, Landschaftsarchitekt BSLA, Rorschach

Engineer for substructures and waterworks: BHA team, Ingenieure AG, Frauenfeld und Fröhlich Wasserbau AG, Frauenfeld

Bridge engineer: Conzett Bronzini Partners, dipl. Ing. ETH/FH/SIA, Chur

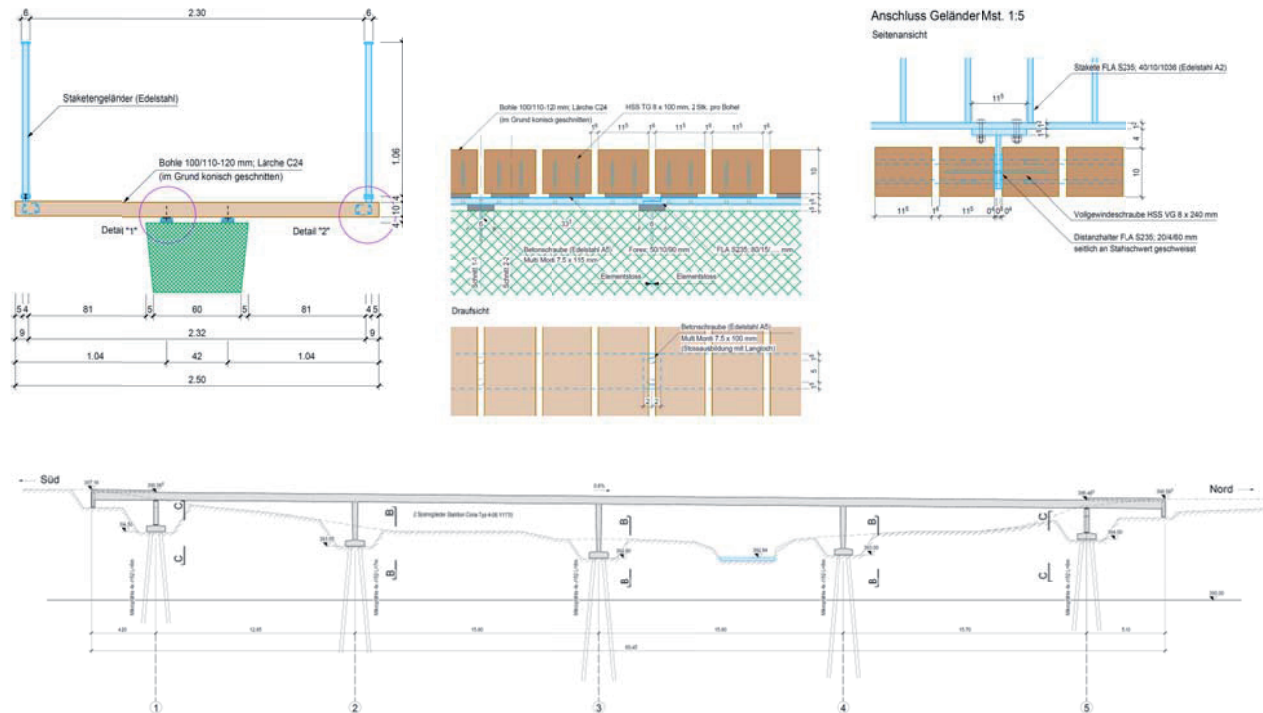


Fig. 1: Standardized details for all bridges (the timber walkway has to resist the impact of a maintenance chariot) and longitudinal section of Schwarzpappelbrücke (black poplar's bridge)

