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February 26, 2007

The Board of Trustees  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees:

As a 1994 recipient of the American Society of Landscape Architects' Olmstead Medal, it is my pleasure to recommend the nonprofit Great Valley Center in Modesto, California for this year's award.

Throughout my career in the private sector, government and public policy, I have recognized that a vital component of successful communities is a vibrant nonprofit sector that works to ensure participation from all elements of the community. The Great Valley Center is one of those unique organizations that truly speak to the goal of inclusion.

In the time I have known of the Great Valley Center, Carol Whiteside and her staff, I have also had the pleasure of being a repeat guest at their annual conferences. At these events, I have been struck by the diversity of interests the Center is able to bring together in order to discuss, without rancor or conflict, the issues facing California's often overlooked Central Valley. From farmers to activists to politicians, the Center's forums and events act as the safe space for proponents of opposing views to discuss complex issues. I believe that this is an important contribution to any community because open, honest dialogue is often the first step to developing solutions.

In my current work as Chairman of CityView, I am dedicated to building communities in the central neighborhoods of urban areas. One thing I have learned is that community building takes time, consensus building, and vision. I believe the work, events, and forums of the Great Valley Center over the past decade embody those elements and are more than worthy of recognition.

Sincerely,

Henry Cisneros  
Executive Chairman  
CityView

February 23, 2007

Board of Trustees  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001

**Subject: Nomination Letter – Olmstead Medal, Great Valley Center**

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees:

It is my great pleasure to nominate the Great Valley Center in Modesto California for the 2007 ASLA Olmstead Medal. Having worked with the GVC over many years I can attest to the breadth and depth their programs have had to impact the future of the Valley. The Great Valley Center is highly deserving of the recognition the Medal would afford for its environmental leadership, vision, and stewardship.

The vision of the Great Valley Center, a nonprofit organization, is to study and actively address issues that affect the entire Central Valley of California. The Valley encompasses 19 counties, more than 100 cities, varying geographic and political entities and a wide variety of agricultural, environmental, scenic and natural habitat resources. No other organization seeks to address these issues on such a scale.

The numerous diverse partnerships the GVC has formed towards creating more healthy and vibrant communities. As AIA President, I know it is vital for the architectural profession to join in broad collations to apply design principles that will dramatically improve environmental performance of the built environment. Through partnerships, design competitions, and public outreach, the GVC has joined with AIA, other design professionals and civic leaders as an invaluable local partner in communicating these principals and their benefits to the public.

The organization's dedicated staff has enabled the Great Valley Center to take on intractable problems that transcend the political and cultural boundaries of the Valley. A bridge-builder, the Center brings together those who might otherwise not be found in the same room together, much less solving problems that many consider beyond solution.

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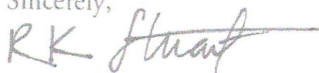
A sampling of the projects developed by the Center includes the following projects that are most directly related to the goals of the Medal. A visit to the Center's website, [www.greatvalley.org](http://www.greatvalley.org), will highlight the profound environmental, economic, and social issues being faced in the Valley. These projects clearly demonstrate the Center's willingness to tackle the tough issues and its successes in bring forth solutions that can be implemented.

- Agri-Food Research Institute at the University of California, Merced
- San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Planning Process
- California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley
- Creative Fresno and Creative Economies
- Great Valley Photo Contest
- GreenStop Architectural Design Competition
- Housing the Next 10 Million Architectural Design Competition
- Highway 99 Task Force
- Statistical Indicators Reports & Database
- Pixley Connect Project and Rural Telecommunications
- Great Valley Solar Partnership
- The Valley Futures Project

The organization's leader, Carol Whiteside, is the driving force behind the Center's mission to enhance the quality of life for the Valley's residents by showing them how they can participate in defining their future. Carol's remarkable political insight, her inquisitiveness, her ability to marshal forces, develop funding and generate the willingness to attack the pressing issues facing the Valley inspire all who have the good fortune to spend time with her. Surprisingly, she did not rise through the ranks of planning schools or academia: her approach developed in an organic and original way, through engaging her community. Carol's approach, embodied in all the GVC does, speaks to the value of planning that grows out of communities of interest rather than "top down" solutions handed to them.

Having seen the impacts of the Center's work over many years I am honored to nominate the Great Valley Center for the 2007 Olmstead Medal. The Center not only embodies the spirit of the Medal, I am confident the Medal will spur the Center to even greater success in the future.

Sincerely,



R.K. Stewart, FAIA

2007 President, American Institute of Architects  
Principal, Gensler Architecture, Design & Planning

CC: Nancy Somerville, ASLA

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February 20, 2008

Board of Trustees  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees,

I write to support the Great Valley Center's nomination for ASLA's Olmstead Medal. I have known GVC's founder, Carol Whiteside, since her early days with the State of California. In 1997, I was delighted with the creation of the Great Valley Center and believe its extraordinary efforts to improve the Central Valley deserve special recognition.

I have a personal and professional stake in the future of the Central Valley. I am a fourth generation Californian with deep roots in Tulare County, the agricultural heart of the Valley. As a member of Governor Schwarzenegger's Cabinet, I serve as his chief advisor on issues related to the state's natural, historic, and cultural resources. Therefore, I know that the Central Valley's economic, social and environmental future will have a defining impact on California.

Under Carol's leadership, the Great Valley Center has promoted a regional perspective through research, policy initiatives, leadership training, and philanthropic programs. The Center's indicator reports on the environment, health, education and the economy, and its annual public opinion surveys have been extremely valuable in tracking conditions and attitudes in the Valley. The Center's leadership has been critical in launching policy initiatives such as the Highway 99 Corridor enhancement program and in assisting the Governor's California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.

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The Great Valley Center's leadership programs for elected officials, college students and underrepresented groups have expanded the skills and regional perspective of more than 600 current and future elected officials, some of whom have since been elected to higher office. The Center's LEGACI grants have provided critical seed money for dozens of environmental, economic and community development projects throughout the Central Valley.

The accomplishments of the Great Valley Center in such a short period of time are truly remarkable. No organization in California had done more to define the region or help plan for its future than the Great Valley Center. I enthusiastically support its nomination for the Olmstead Medal.

Sincerely,



Mike Chrisman  
Secretary for Resources

**William H. Liskamm, FAIA**

Architecture Environmental Planning

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San Rafael, CA 94901  
Phone & FAX (415) 453-3966**

**billiskamm@aol.com**

February 14, 2008

Board of Trustees  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell, Honors & Awards Coordinator  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 I St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees:

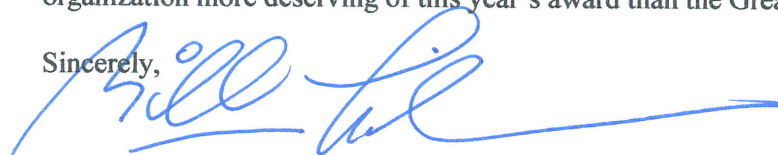
I am writing in support of the Great Valley Center's nomination as a recipient of ASLA's 2007 Olmstead Award. In my twenty-five years of architectural practice, much of my work has focused on increasing the use of architectural design competitions in the United States. And since its inception, the Great Valley Center has been a leader in making the connection between good design and then most importantly – ensuring that the ideas from these competitions are actually implemented.

In 2006, to cite one example, GVC provided the leadership and inspiration for an innovative effort to solicit designs to raise expectations for California's highway rest areas - an indispensable but much maligned element of road travel. The "*GreenStop*" competition sought sustainable-oriented entries that would include interpretive elements that provided opportunities for weary travelers to better understand the unique landscape, cultural and environmental qualities and products of a particular region. Using a site specific rest area in Central California, the goal of this competition was to serve as a pilot project that would create a new model that could be replicated elsewhere in the state.

Multi-disciplinary teams from more than 10 countries and 30 states competed for the cash prize GVC established. GVC also came up with the concept, provided the organizational staffing, assembled critical partnerships with private sector, and secured the attention and commitments of the California Department of Transportation. All of these efforts are reflective of GVC's approach.

Most importantly, GVC views these competitions and its work as more than academic exercises destined for a library shelf. Because of GVC's extensive network and commitment to getting ideas in front of decisionmakers, the winning entry for the "*GreenStop*" rest area concept is now in the planning stages at the California Department of Transportation. I can think of no other organization more deserving of this year's award than the Great Valley Center.

Sincerely,



Bill Liskamm, FAIA



## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS

### PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

February 16, 2007

Olmsted Medal Nominations  
c/o Carolyn Mitchell  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: Olmsted Medal Nominee—The Great Valley Center of Modesto

Dear ASLA Board of Trustees:

It is my distinct pleasure and honor to endorse the Great Valley Center of Modesto for our most prestigious award, the Olmsted Medal. The Great Valley Center's (GVC) work in policy advocacy, education, and action embodies ASLA's commitment to stewardship of the land and quality of life.

The GVC's mission is varied and includes advocacy and education about the preservation of the Central Valley's crucial natural resources and environment. The Center is committed to sustainable practices in agriculture and the education of policy makers, elected officials, land owners, and even teens. Their work is not only admirable in and of itself, but they also stand out as one of the few organizations making such a profound commitment to the Central Valley.

The GVC's approach to fulfilling its mission strikes a balance between economic concerns and those of the environment. They have proven that one need not choose one over the other, that agriculture, development, and responsible land stewardship can co-exist in ways that maximize quality of life for all. Their inclusive approach to problem solving and community discussions is also laudable and a wonderful example for all.

It is my hope that the influence of the GVC continues and even stretches beyond the Central Valley into other regions of California and this great nation by encouraging thoughtful future development that considers a beautiful, bountiful, and healthful environment for the benefit of all. Their commitment to improvement of the environmental design and quality of life for the citizens of the Central Valley should be commended, and I can think of no more honorable way than to award them the Olmsted Medal.

Thank you for your kind consideration of my recommendation of the Great Valley Center. The Center is certainly deserving of this fine honor.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hamid Shirvani".

Hamid Shirvani, FRSA, FASLA, AICP  
President