

## Landscape Architects: Small Businesses, Big Solutions

Small businesses are the backbone of the California economy and are helping with California's economic recovery. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, small firms accounted for over 60 percent of all new jobs created in California since mid-2010. In landscape architecture, nearly all firms are designated as small businesses and they are doing their part to help jump-start California's economy—creating jobs focusing on the planning and designing of critical infrastructure and other community assets, while fostering economic development. The Landscape Architecture profession is poised to lead jobs growth in the design professions in the coming years.

As California continues to rebound from the recent economic crisis, it is critical that the State Legislature continue to address policies that provide certainty and stability for small businesses and other entrepreneurs, so that they may operate in a stable regulatory and financial environment and help grow our economy. The California Council of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CC/ASLA) applauds the Legislature for passing policies that have helped small businesses, including regulatory reforms and the protection of legitimate business activities. These actions help small businesses, in general, and landscape architects, in particular, compete more fairly in the marketplace.

The Legislature can also continue to help small landscape architecture firms by passing policies that invest in the State's infrastructure. As our infrastructure ages and requires repair and replacement, landscape architects' unique skills are a part of the solution. Providing a bridge between the natural and built environments, landscape architects have the skills to help rebuild our communities—planning and designing multimodal transportation corridors, storm water management systems, urban parks and other recreational spaces and helping implement sustainable community strategies. California's investment in these types of community projects will help create jobs throughout the design, construction, and supply industries, while also driving other community-based economic development. Landscape architecture firms play a significant role in these activities and provide value in an expanding economy.

## Investing in Our Water Infrastructure Systems

### ISSUE

The state depends on ample, clean water supplies to preserve health, to sustain a high standard of living and to maintain the quality of ecosystems. Water is a finite and valuable resource that is shared among human beings, and between human beings and ecosystems. Impervious surfaces caused by sprawling urban development increase volumes and rates of storm flows, carry pollutants into streams, prevent groundwater recharge, reduce stream base flows, and impact water temperatures. The unnecessary use of high water-demanding plants and unfit irrigation technology can increase consumption rates and waste water, while decreasing the resiliency of our urban spaces to withstand drought.

### ROLE OF THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

For decades, landscape architects have used green infrastructure solutions to address problems related to stormwater and water-use. Landscape architects use natural landforms and techniques that replicate the natural hydrology of the landscape, which allows more water to remain on site, reducing the burden on storm drain systems and minimizing combined sewer overflows, all while greening the environment. In California, landscape architects are required to design planting and irrigation systems which conserve water and are resilient to drought conditions.

### CC/ASLA POSITION

The American Society of Landscape Architects urges efficient use of available water supplies, equitable allocation of water resources, and the provision of safe drinking water. ASLA encourages land use practices that conserve and protect water resources and related ecosystems and eliminate all forms of water pollution.

- CC/ASLA urges multi-functional integration of water resource facilities with natural ecosystems and human communities.
- CC/ASLA supports the continued application and enforcement of AB1881 The Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO)



Photo: San Diego ASLA



## Fixing Our Transportation Networks for All Users

### ISSUE

In order to provide balanced and equitable transportation alternatives like walking, bicycling, and access to public transportation, roadways need to be designed to make these options safe and attractive. However, most transportation rights-of-way are still designed exclusively for vehicles, often making travel conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists unsafe. 'Complete Streets' accommodate all modes of transportation safely, and often involve a 'road diet', where existing vehicle lanes are reduced and replaced with wider sidewalks and bike lanes.

### ROLE OF THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Using progressive planning and design principles, landscape architects help to create communities with transportation options that meet the needs of neighborhoods, with increased transit-oriented development and land patterns, sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, and trails that lead to schools, work, shopping, and other daily destinations. Enhanced access to public transportation is also key to successful land development patterns. Landscape architects are particularly adept at designing multimodal projects that are safe and attractive for users of all ages and abilities.

## Community Revitalization Through Parks

### ISSUE

People in many communities do not have access to outdoor open space. Parks and recreation spaces provide critical outlets for Californians to have much-needed physical activity, can serve as outdoor classrooms and can also serve as economic catalysts for municipalities—creating jobs, spurring private investments, and enhancing property values.

### ROLE OF THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Landscape architects are perhaps best known for the design of parks across the nation, whether creating new parks and recreation facilities or helping rehabilitate and maintain existing ones. Using their expertise, landscape architects design parks in ways that reflect community values, attract local economic development, increase nearby property values, address stormwater management needs, efficiently use water and help Californians achieve more healthy lifestyles.

### CC/ASLA POSITION

CC/ASLA urges the Legislature to pass bills that lead to emissions reduction, directing funds towards non-vehicular modes of transportation; reducing greenhouse gases to enable priorities for pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit options; and establishing safety design criteria for bikeways throughout the state. Additionally, a Safe and Complete Streets policy for California will help fix our transportation networks to safely support all users, while also helping to create more economically vibrant communities.

- Transportation Legislation should be realistic, and make exemptions available for projects for which costs would be too prohibitive; for highways and other roads where pedestrians are not allowed; or where population, employment density, and transit service are so low that the expected users would not include pedestrians, bicyclists, and/or public transit users.
- Legislation should allow local agencies and MPOs to create their own policies.



Cavallo Point Fort Baker  
Photo: Cheryl Barton

### CC/ASLA POSITION

CC/ASLA urges the Legislature to pass bills that recognize parks as vital components to infrastructure within communities, and that will provide assistance to communities who want to develop parks and recreation facilities so that neighborhoods may realize the myriad of benefits from these outdoor spaces. CC/ASLA advocates for parks funding, particularly in underserved communities, and recognizes that it can be more efficient to combine parks with schools in 'joint use facilities' so that resources may be maximized for outdoor environmental education and recreation.



Sunnylands Center & Gardens  
Photo: James Burnett



# LICENSURE



Stanford University  
Photo: Cheryl Barton

## What Landscape Architects Do

Landscape architects plan livable communities that foster active lifestyles, design green streets that manage stormwater runoff, design low water-use planting and irrigation plans, plan cutting-edge transportation corridors that are safe for all users, design fire-safe landscapes to reduce property damage in wildfires, and help communities prepare for and recover from natural disasters. Landscape architecture encompasses the analysis, planning, design, management, and stewardship of the natural and built environment through science and design. Well-known National examples include Central Park in New York City, the grounds of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and Chicago's Millennium Park. In California, the work of landscape architects can be seen in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and Embarcadero, San Diego's Balboa Park, The Great Park in Orange County and in our treasured natural spaces, such as Yosemite and Lake Tahoe. Landscape architecture includes both iconic and neighborhood places, including commercial developments, downtown streetscapes, green roofs, local parks, bikeways, trails and residential communities.

## Licensure Protects Your Community

Fundamentally, the practice of landscape architecture helps keep the public safe from hazards, protects and maximizes natural resources, and helps prevent damage to public or private property from changes in the built environment. Landscape architects help provide stormwater solutions that effectively manage water to minimize runoff, improve water quality, control erosion, and eliminate safety hazards from standing water/ice. Landscape architects are equally qualified in site design—whether a playground, streetscape, campus, or park—that safely coordinates all uses of a site to avoid injuries and reduce the threat of crime.

Landscape architecture helps ensure roads, parking lots, medians and other transportation elements to safeguard driver and pedestrian safety, are ADA compliant, and provide environmental and community benefits.



LA Waterfront Gateway  
Photo: AECOM

The only way to make sure that landscape architects protect the public in these ways is to license landscape architects. The education, experience, and examination required to earn licensure **provide a guarantee** that the individual has demonstrated competency in all of the areas that impact the public health, safety, and welfare.

## Licensure Protects Clients and Fosters Competition

States and localities recognize the dangers to the public from the built environment. This is evident not only through licensing, but through building codes and ordinances related to water use, fire, flood, landscape design, and other aspects that can pose a threat to the health and safety of our communities. These codes typically demonstrate the public trust of these communities in licensed professionals, requiring a licensee to oversee and stamp public and private projects that require public approval.

Excluding landscape architects from this system only serves to limit expertise and stifle competition for this industry. In the end, less competition means higher fees for these services.



Stanford University  
Photo: Cheryl Barton



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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# LICENSURE

## Facts and Figures

**All 50 states** have recognized that regulation of landscape architecture is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. All but three states regulate the profession through a practice act, which requires a license to practice the profession and use the title 'landscape architect.' The remaining three states have enacted title act statutes, which is a weaker form of regulation that allows anyone to practice landscape architecture if they call it something else. A practice act is important because of the real danger to clients and the users of these public and private spaces: physical injury, property damage, and financial ruin.

### EDUCATION

Most landscape architects have an accredited degree in landscape architecture. The Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB) accredits bachelor- and master-level programs at 69 institutions across the United States. Additionally, the Landscape Architects Technical Committee in California approves extension certificate-level programs. Six California universities have accredited or approved programs:

**CAL POLY**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO

**UC DAVIS**  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

**UCLA**

**CAL POLY**  
POMONA

**USC** University of  
Southern California

**Berkeley**  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

### EXPERIENCE

California requires that landscape architects have at least two years of experience under a licensed professional in order to qualify for examination. Some flexibility is provided for educational background, allowing candidates with more years of experience to qualify without an accredited degree, reducing barriers to entry into the profession.

### NATIONAL EXAMINATION

All states require every candidate to pass the four-part Landscape Architect Registration Examination (LARE). While education and experience standards ensure each candidate has been prepared to enter the profession, the LARE provides a definitive measure of competence to ensure each landscape architect will **protect public health, safety, and welfare**.

Skills tested include: project development; site suitability; stormwater management; erosion control; hydrology; and irrigation. Candidates also must demonstrate competence in such areas as: layout of playground equipment; vehicular and pedestrian circulation; roadway alignment design; site lighting layouts; manipulation of contours and spot elevations; calculations of slopes, grades, and volumes of material; design of surface and subsurface storm drainage, including hydraulic characteristics and storm drain connections; and site planning for buildings.

### CALIFORNIA EXAMINATION


After passing the four-part national LARE, candidates in California must pass the California Supplemental Examination (CSE) in order to become licensed in the State. The CSE tests additional competence in practice areas of particular significance in the State, including: State codes and ordinances, water-efficient planting and irrigation, native plants, fire safety, CEQA, permitting, agency jurisdiction, and other topics.

## Support Continued State Licensure and Regulations

We urge your support of legislation that provides effective regulation of the practice of landscape architecture. Licensure ensures that only capable, trained professionals are performing landscape architecture work that impacts the public health, safety, and welfare.



# WHAT IS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ?



*Landscape architects create memorable public spaces like the Sunnylands Center and Gardens*  
Photo: James Burnett

Landscape architecture encompasses the analysis, planning, design, management, and stewardship of the natural and built environment through science and design. Well-known examples of landscape architecture include Central Park in New York City; the grounds of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.; and Chicago's Millennium Park. In California, the work of landscape architects can be seen in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and Embarcadero, San Diego's Balboa Park, The Great Park in Orange County and treasured natural spaces, such as Yosemite and Lake Tahoe. Landscape architecture includes both iconic and neighborhood places, including local parks, residential communities, commercial developments, and downtown streetscapes.

The fundamental practice of landscape architecture includes keeping the public safe from hazards, protecting natural resources, and sustainably managing the natural and built environment surrounding our homes and communities. The public interest is best served when qualified professionals carry out these responsibilities.

Landscape architects help create well-planned livable communities, leading the way in initiatives, such as neighborhood master plans, designing green streets, managing stormwater runoff, and planning cutting-edge transportation corridors.

## What Landscape Architects Do

Landscape architecture is a profession that is broad in scale and scope. Landscape architects receive education and training in site design, historic preservation and planning, as well as in technical and scientific areas, such as grading, drainage, horticulture, and the social and environmental sciences. With this diverse background, landscape architects possess a unique blend of skills to help families, communities, and businesses address important local, regional, state, and national concerns.

Landscape architecture is regulated by state licensure requirements. Becoming licensed generally requires a university degree in landscape architecture and completion of a period of supervised practice. All states require passage of the extensive four-part national licensing examination called the Landscape Architect Registration Examination (LARE).

In California, candidates must also pass the California Supplemental Examination (CSE). The CSE tests additional competence in practice areas of particular significance in the State, including: State codes and ordinances, water-efficient planting and irrigation, native plants, fire safety, CEQA, permitting, agency jurisdiction, and other topics.



*National Chavez Center*  
Photo: Dennis J. Dahlin



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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS**

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# Landscape Architects Manage Energy, Water and Stormwater

Landscape architects provide efficient, cost-effective, sustainable infrastructure solutions, effectively helping reduce energy requirements, managing stormwater, and reducing the need for valuable water resources in the built environment. Landscape architects use permeable paving, vegetated retention basins, green roofs, bioswales, rain gardens, and other design techniques to reduce runoff, improve water quality, and recharge groundwater supplies. They also use native and drought tolerant planting schemes and design highly efficient landscape irrigation systems.



Photo: San Diego ASLA

# Landscape Architects Design Transportation Solutions

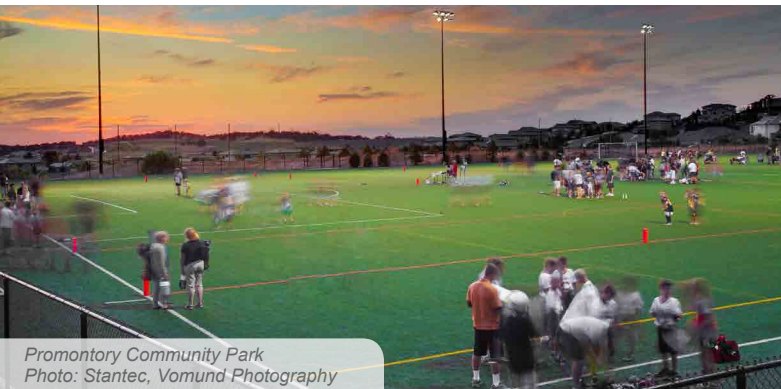
Landscape architects help communities by designing multi-use transportation corridors that accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, people with disabilities, and people who rely on public transportation. These systems reduce reliance on single-use automotive transport, which in turn reduces traffic, improves air quality, and promotes a more active way of life.



Folsom Light Rail Station  
Photo: Quadriga

# Landscape Architects Support Active Lifestyles

Landscape architects design communities that support active and healthy lifestyles by linking homes, schools, businesses, parks, and recreation facilities together with walking and bicycle paths and sidewalks that provide safe and easy alternatives to driving.



Promontory Community Park  
Photo: Stantec, Vomund Photography

## CALIFORNIA COUNCIL of the ASLA

The California Council of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CC/ASLA) is an organization comprised of the four California Chapters including Northern California, California Sierra, Southern California, and San Diego. The purpose of the Council is to advance the profession of Landscape Architecture in the State of California as an instrument of service in the public welfare. We serve as the coordinating Council for the four chapters on legislative and regulatory matters affecting the profession of landscape architecture.



## AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Founded in 1899, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) is the national professional association representing landscape architects. Beginning with 11 members, ASLA has grown to more than 15,000 members and 49 chapters, representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The Society's mission is to lead, to educate, and to participate in the careful stewardship, wise planning, and artful design of our cultural and natural environments. ASLA promotes the profession of landscape architecture and advances the practice through advocacy, education, communication, and fellowship.

The majority of ASLA members, approximately 70 percent, work in private practice. More than one-third of them are employed by small landscape architecture firms with fewer than 10 employees. Nearly 16 percent of ASLA's members work in the public sector, including in federal, state, regional, and municipal agencies.

[www.asla.org](http://www.asla.org)

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