

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

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

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