



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

