

**Submittal Category:** I. Design – Commercial Design  
**Project Identity:** The Reserve  
**Location:** 13031 W. Jefferson Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California 90094

**Through innovative site design and programming, the Landscape Architect revitalized this post industrial brownfield- a former United States Postal facility, recovering over an acre of green, sustainable open space from the concrete surface of the industrial site, and supporting the LEED gold certification.**

### **Design Approach**

The Landscape Architect redesigned the architect's initial parking scheme, maximizing landscape by creating 40,000 square feet of open space out what had been previously designed as parking. This new open space extends into a 250 x 50-foot slot excised from the original structure, extending the site's open space into a dramatic 800-foot long, 50-foot central core. This "false perspective," defined by an allee of native *Platanus racemosa* trees, creates a vista linking the adjacent Ballona Creek to the interior of the architecture.

Sustainability elements include bioswales for storm water management, treating all of the runoff from the site before it eventually flows into the adjacent creek. The new automatic irrigation system reduces potable water consumption by 100% and non-potable water use by 52%. The plant palette of native and regionally drought-tolerant species, even in the areas that are designed to contain runoff, further contributes to the reduction of water use. The new landscape exceeds local open space zoning requirements by over 500%. Over 600 trees were planted on the site, reducing heat gain.

### **Role of Landscape Architect:**

The project team was unique in that the Landscape Architect drove many of the design decisions from the initial stages of the project, through to the ongoing maintenance. The scope included all aspects of exterior design, hardscape and amenities, lighting, custom seating, the fireplace, dog park, volleyball court, and outdoor gathering areas- and even built birdhouses to encourage habitat development! They led the design of the site layout, intricate grading, soil engineering, and drainage systems. The client supported the landscape architects' goal to reimagine the site as a green respite.

The team included the civil engineer, architect, lighting designer, local artists and a specimen tree grower, who was actively involved throughout the process.

### **Quality of Life:**

With high priority placed on the landscape, the project not only invites habitat back into a post-industrial commercial district, it puts into practice what landscape architects have long known: that a connection with nature and the availability of useable outdoor space is necessary for productivity, creativity and overall well being. The landscape brings a dog park, a bike repair shop, multiple intensively landscaped outdoor rooms, and viewing decks to the tenants. This strong connection to the outdoors makes The Reserve a high-energy work environment that encourages movement and activity, social gathering and a connection to nature, promoting a truly productive and creative setting.

### **Significance:**

The project creates a highly visible and valued haven in a growing part of Los Angeles. It reveals what design can do for a blighted urban environment, presenting a link to the past and bridge to the future, while improving the quality of life for the users. The success of this project demonstrates the fecund power of landscape design and the positive shift in the expanding role of the landscape architect. The Reserve creates a model for other designers and other projects, a prototype and a paradigm that takes the typology of the project forward into the future.

### **Special Factors:**

30 feet of fill from the 1960s, when the original wetland was raised with sludge excavated from the Marina, created an extra challenge, impeding drainage. The landscape architect designed special tree planting wells and subsurface site drainage to provide ideal planting conditions for the trees. The result is a vibrant, active area that not only serves the tenants but also increases habitat and improves the health and the quality of the nearby creek and the surrounding neighborhood. Rather than the typical focus on maximizing indoor space, the project team emphasized the importance of natural landscape and useable outdoor areas, incorporating the landscape into the restructuring of the buildings.