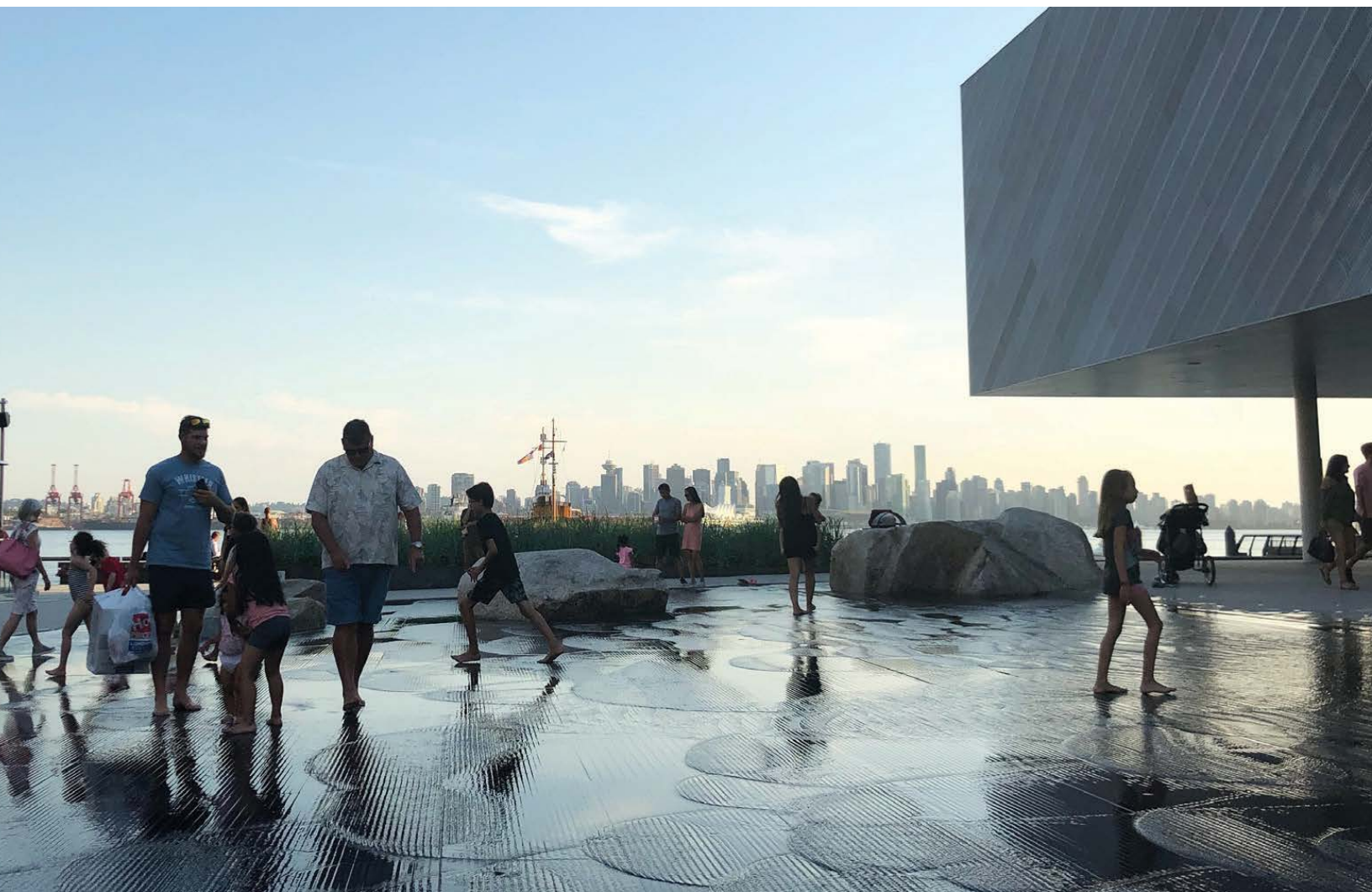


/ Advancing the art, science and practice of landscape architecture

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN CANADA



CSLA | AAPC
Canadian Society of Landscape Architects
Association des architectes paysagistes du Canada

The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects is the voice of the profession and an advocate for its members on issues such as urban revitalization, cultural heritage and sustainable development. Landscape architects promote multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to the creation of meaningful, enjoyable human environments, and to the sustainability of natural ecosystems and special places. Combining art with science, the profession provides insight and creative design to development and planning processes, responds to the needs of society, promotes respect for the values of the broader landscape and the environment, and minimizes impacts to natural systems.

“Landscape architecture and its allied disciplines seek real solutions to real problems, from master planning to detail design.”

— **Nancy Pollock-Ellwand**
in *Landscapes / Paysages* magazine Vol 16, no 4

“When landscape architects are employed appropriately at the beginning of the planning process, development can achieve a far better return on the investment. But more significantly, properly supported by enlightened clients and systems, landscape architects can ensure the development of more sustainable and resilient towns and cities, urban realm, transport systems, parks, squares, agriculture, forestry, energy and water system solutions as well as creating a greater sense of place and community. All of this is vital for health, wealth and well-being of communities in every country.”

— **Kathryn Moore**, President,
International Federation of Landscape Architects,
excerpt *IFLA Bulletin* (June 2018)

Celebrate Landscape Architecture

The term “landscape architecture” first appeared in print in 1828, in the title of a book by Scottish writer Gilbert Laing Meason.

The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects has chosen the month of April to celebrate the importance of landscape architecture. That month includes Earth Day on April 22, and the birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted on April 27, the first landscape architect to practice in North America. Among his many achievements, Olmsted is credited with co-designing Central Park in New York City, as well as designing Mount Royal Park in Montreal, and Assiniboine Park in Winnipeg. One of the first in Canada to advertise as a landscape architect was Frederick Gage Todd of

Montréal (who worked with Olmsted's firm in Canada), and Charles Ernest Woolverton, a Canadian from Grimsby, Ontario. Both established private practices in 1900 and 1901 respectively. Todd worked with Olmsted for many years before striking out on his own. Todd's office worked on the designs for many spaces including for the National Capital Region, the Assiniboine Park in Winnipeg, as well as Wascana and Victoria Parks in Regina.



Mount Royal Park,
Olmsted 1877

Introduction

What is landscape architecture?

How can it make our communities more livable?

What are livable communities?

What principles are used in creating livable communities?

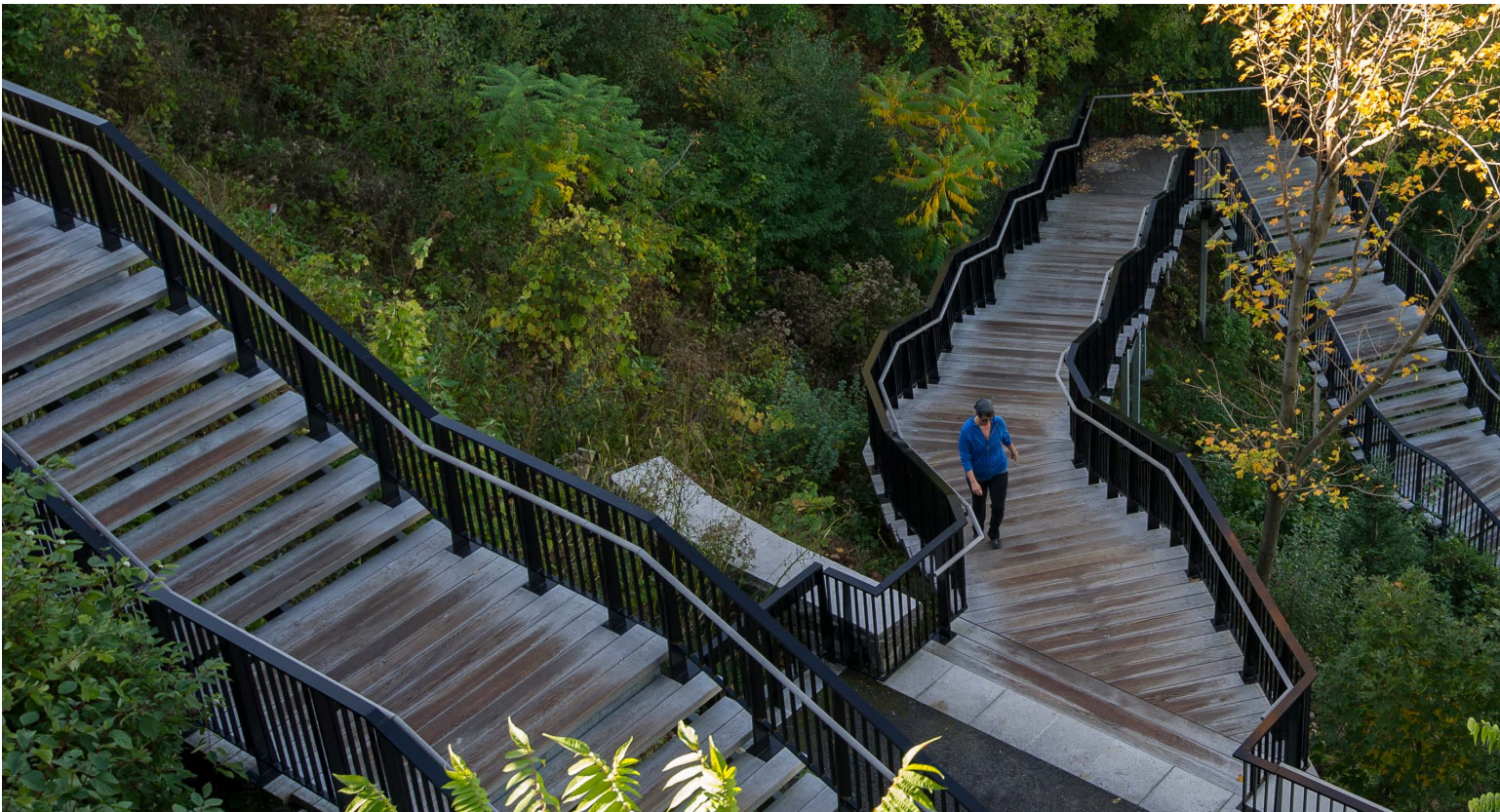
As you look around your town, city, and neighbourhood, landscape architecture is everywhere. Most spaces are informed by the expertise that landscape architects are trained to provide.

Whether we live in urban or rural communities, the work of landscape architects is crucial: the bike paths and roads we pedal along; the playgrounds where our children run and jump; housing developments we call home; educational campuses where we learn; health or therapeutic landscapes; or the public spaces we use to enjoy and reflect — all have benefited from the work of landscape architects.

Whether viewing the designed spaces of Parliament Hill in Ottawa, or the skateparks in urban centres across the

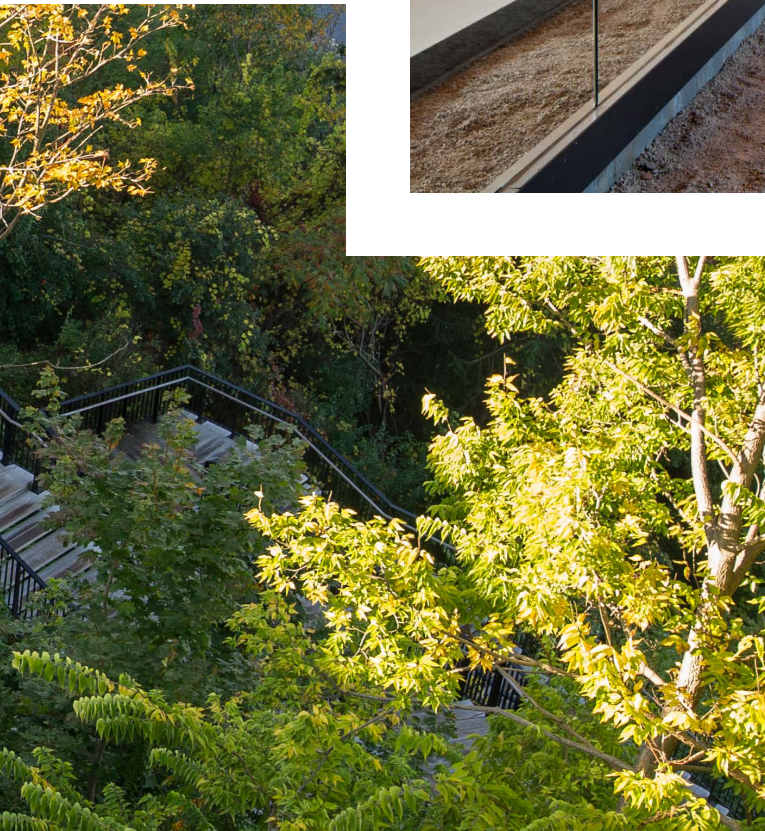
country, the range of the work of landscape architects is limitless. Whether creating external landscapes that increase the efficiency of stormwater systems, or landscapes that create social spaces for inner city business developments, or that plan for mixed-use spaces in residential communities, the role of landscape architects is to ensure that public and shared areas are designed to conserve and enhance natural beauty. The work of landscape architects addresses a wide range of social, economic, and environmental factors.

Versatility and flexibility are key. So is understanding the big picture. Housing or education projects, such as the University of British Columbia's Ponderosa Commons, demand a very different design approach from that of urban streets and parks, publicly accessible rural areas, or major infrastructure projects.



Right: Ponderosa Commons, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.

Below: Parliament Hill Escarpment Stairway and Site Rehabilitation



Through planning and collaboration, landscape architecture has the power to transform a space into an area that is sustainable and functional, all while embodying beauty and character.

Landscape architects see the bigger picture and are aware that any change in appearance or function of a space can have a wide impact. The discipline is rooted in an understanding of the environment and how space can be created to be healthy and pleasing.

Landscape architects are team leaders because they bring multi-disciplinary knowledge from the natural and environmental sciences as well as planning policy, and meld it with vision, design, and art. →



Taking Back the Riverbank: Pijiniuskaq Park & King Street in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia

From waterfront parks, to land conservation and reclamation (such as Taking Back the Riverbank: Pijiniuskaq Park & King Street in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia) right through to northern landscapes, transportation, the design of cemeteries, green roofs and urban forests, and recreational theme parks — the role of landscape architects is limitless.

By engaging with our municipalities landscape architects can help create livable community spaces. By engaging with the federal government the profession can ensure livable communities become the nation's priority.



Iqaluit Municipal Cemetery, Nunavut

To best understand the role of landscape architects, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects created the Canadian Landscape Charter. The Charter eloquently outlines landscape architects' commitment to the following core principles:

Recognize landscapes as vital

- By ensuring that all landscapes are understood and respected for their geographic, cultural, heritage, social, aesthetic, economic and environmental values, whether as cultural and/or natural features, or as physical and/or abstract entities.
- By ensuring that all landscapes are considered, from the most precious and well-known to the most ignored and spoiled, whether they are wild, rural or urban.

Consider all people

- By ensuring that all landscape interventions contribute to how people experience their physical and sensory environment, while protecting and/or enhancing Canada's heritage and creating a better place to live now and in the future. By practicing participatory and collaborative processes that consider all stakeholders, to achieve sustainable landscape outcomes.
- By increasing the awareness and understanding of the traditional values, ecological knowledge and practices of the various Canadian communities, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, which relate to customary stewardship of the land, and by considering these values and practices in both management and design.

Inspire stewardship

- By adopting a holistic approach to design processes, ensuring more sustainable outcomes.
- By embracing new knowledge, practices and tools together with traditional ecological knowledge and practices.
- By melding the decision-making process with the creative process to better achieve sustainable development goals.

Expand knowledge

- By acknowledging that our understanding of the natural and cultural processes that create landscapes is incomplete, and that those processes are dynamic, not static.
- By seeking a better understanding of the links between landscapes and governance, culture, physical and mental health, economic development and environment.
- By identifying and assessing the complex, multi-dimensional and interdependent values of landscapes, regardless of temporal and spatial scales and origin, as a primary tool for sustainable landscape management.
- Show leadership.
- By inspiring through principles, guidelines and metrics, exchanges on the subject of landscape amongst institutions, complementary disciplines and the general population across Canada.
- By encouraging knowledge development and sharing, recognition of best practices, collaboration and outreach amongst multidisciplinary practitioners.
- By encouraging management and design processes that are innovative, resilient and responsive, and by re-evaluating assumptions and principles to better anticipate or even influence demographic and environmental changes.
- By establishing the Charter as a shared guiding vision that stimulates sustainable development practices.
- By elaborating realistic and applicable strategic planning processes attracting stakeholders to commit to Charter values, principles and its strategic plan.

> *See the Canadian Landscape Charter*

Objectives of Landscape Architecture

Placemaking and livable communities

The process of placemaking strengthens livable communities by identifying local assets and potential, and by creating inspirational and quality public spaces that prioritize people's health, happiness and well-being. Landscape architects are expert placemakers.

Landscape architects are integral to the creation of spaces that have been developed collaboratively and that have been shaped through active community engagement.

Placemaking prioritizes physical, cultural and social qualities that define place and support ongoing evolution. Landscape architects are involved in both very large and very small placemaking projects that add to the vibrancy of our communities.

One of the best examples of landscape architects' role in placemaking is The Forks in Winnipeg. It has been 30 years since The Forks North Portage Partnership began development of The Forks, at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, as a place where communities have



Top right:
The Forks, Oodena
Celebration Circle,
Winnipeg

Right: The
Forks, Winnipeg



gathered for more than 6,000 years. Its rebirth has led to the transformation of an industrial landscape into a model for waterfront development, urban renewal, and an all-season multi-functional gathering place which is now the heart for Winnipeg.

Berczy Park (Toronto), in the midst of a high-density urban population, was designed by landscape architects to make use of scarce public space while accounting for a rapidly evolving community with diverse needs. The revitalization of this small iconic park transformed contention into consensus, and created place for all.

Simon Fraser University's Trottier Observatory and Science Courtyard is the home of a very popular public outreach program titled Starry Nights. An under-utilized space was transformed into a meaningful and engaging place for scientific learning and community engagement.

Left: Simon Fraser University's Trottier Observatory and Science Courtyard

Below: Berczy Park, Toronto, ON

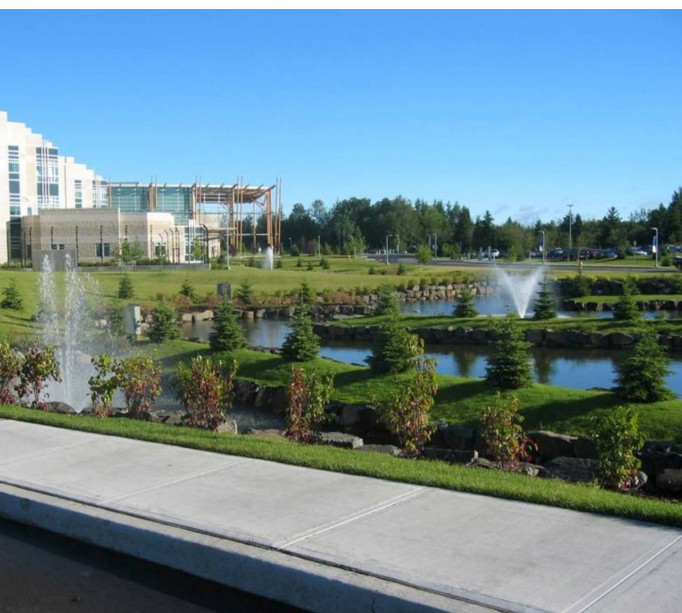


Sustainable, livable environments

Climate change means that planning communities needs to take into account the aspects of our environment that we cannot control. It means our communities must continuously evolve to maintain resilience.

We do not control the severity and timing of environmental changes, or their impact on our communities. By working across natural and cultural systems, landscape architects are uniquely positioned to engage other professions, industries and governments in new alliances equipped to innovatively address complex social and ecological problems and to fully express the opportunities inherent in principles of equity, sustainability, resiliency and democracy.

To ensure a prosperous future within a changing climate we must create communities that have an enhanced capacity for resilience, a willingness to transform and to ensure the long-term sustainability of environments, cultures and well-being.



The CSLA membership is engaged in many municipal projects that are leading the way. Landscape architects are also engaged in research, ensuring that the most recent information regarding science and design drives innovation.

Another example of integrating sustainability and health into landscape architecture is the Thunder Bay Regional Hospital Integrated Stormwater Management and Landscape project — which ensures stormwater and runoff are controlled at the same time as creating green spaces for patients and visitors to this local hospital.

Left: Thunder Bay Regional Hospital Integrated Stormwater Management and Landscape project

Below: Breathe, Edmonton's Green Network Strategy, Edmonton, Alta



Healthy, livable communities

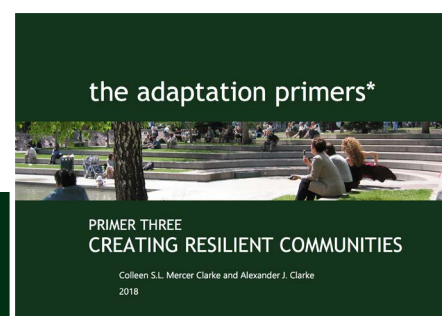
The way our cities, towns, and communities are designed affects our health. Landscape architects have an important role in advancing the development of healthy, livable communities. Land-use planning plays a key role as municipalities work to rethink the way we design and build our communities. The built environment directly and indirectly influences the social determinants of health, such as housing, food security, income and social cohesion. Livable, healthy communities work to promote equity.

Through design and planning, the expertise of landscape architects as leaders of collaborative teams, can help ensure that communities have well-designed and well-maintained parks, urban forests, good public transit, community gardens, and safe and efficient walking and cycling networks.

Landscape architects are the vanguard creating healthy places that are also functional, practical, and resilient. Breathe, Edmonton's Green Network Strategy is but one excellent example.

There are numerous examples of how landscape architecture supports the design of communities that encourage and support healthy environments, intentional communities and housing options, physical activity for recreation and active transportation, and food security.

Many landscape architects are keen to share their project ideas with municipalities across Canada. One example of how the work of landscape architects can be shared is the The Grow More Manual, designed for Toronto community gardens, but applicable to community gardens across the country.



Until recently, much of the dialogue on climate adaptation has been at the regional, provincial/territorial and/or national scale. However, effective action towards enhancing resilience in communities will largely be the results of actions by elected officials, by staff and by community organizations, private sector organizations and individuals.

Specific activities to achieve the goals and objectives that support resilience can include:

- enactment of policies that encourage resilience and support sustainability
- mapping local hazards and levels of risk
- protection or relocation of critical infrastructure
- protection or relocation of valued assets of natural heritage and cultural landscapes
- reassessment of trends in demographics and land use
- promotion of green and blue urbanism
- encouragement for infill and brownfield development and discouragement of urban sprawl
- promotion of resilient architecture and fast-tracking for retrofitting of existing buildings and systems
- promotion of innovation in public transit and in walkable community design
- protection and enhancement for urban canopies
- planning and design that anticipates changes in freshwater and marine water levels
- creation of open spaces suitable for enhanced public use and for festivals that encourage social interaction and promote neighbourhood support systems
- partnerships with local businesses, schools and colleges to broaden capacity and support innovation
- support for locally sourced food
- enhanced disaster response systems
- designated time intervals for the timing and scope of plan review.

Beauty, heritage, preservation and livable communities

Landscape architects are also preservationists, wanting to ensure that communities are able to honour their heritage in a way that is accurate, beautiful, and mindful, all the while contributing positively to learning and the building of community.

Landscape architects are called upon to enhance the beauty of spaces so that history can be better appreciated. One excellent example of this is work undertaken by the National Capital Region at the Mackenzie King Estates.

Canadian history is marked by the mighty St. Lawrence River. It is here that the city of Rimouski recently undertook a major breakwater development that capitalizes on the view of the river while preserving the shoreline as a multi-use and innovative public space that inspires contemplation and meditation as well as celebration and gatherings. The development demonstrates how simplicity of design enhances natural beauty.

Landscape architects are often called upon to commemorate important events by designing spaces that speak to difficult moments in our history. One such example is a park located near l'École Polytechnic in Montréal. The park is understated, peaceful and hopeful, all the while commemorating tragic losses.



Above: Breakwater development, Rimouski, Québec



Left: Mackenzie King Estate, National Capital Region

Below: Nef pour 14 reines, École Polytechnic, Montréal, QC



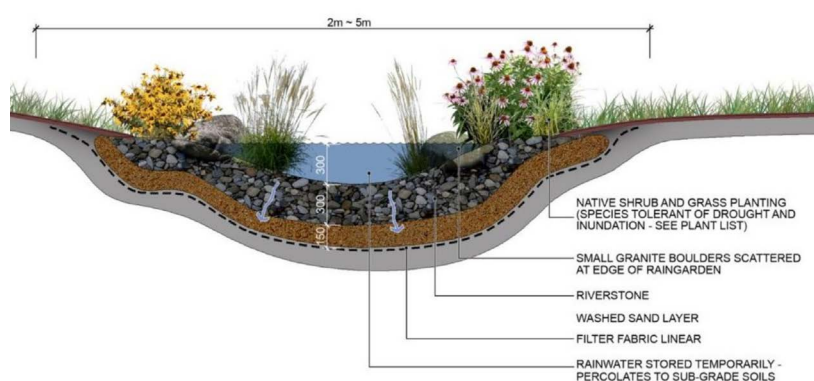
Livable communities through meaningful, public consultation

Landscape architects are natural team leaders for collaborative projects. Given to big-picture thinking, landscape architects are adept at applying a vision that brings together expertise from many disciplines and incorporates elements of art, design, sustainability, resilience, and practicality.

The CSLA is eager to promote and share the leadership capacity of landscape architects with all levels of government. Across the country there are many examples of foresight, consultation and practical engagement.

For example, the City of Markham has created a flagship sustainability strategy called SNAP for Bayview Glen, an established suburban community. SNAP - The Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Program is a strategy that incorporates energy efficiency, water conservation and home renovations.

Landscape architects lead with innovative, new directions that encourage grassroots collaboration while building community. One example is the Residential Rainproofing - Community Program in Toronto. This project demonstrates a practical, refreshing, proactive approach to stormwater management on private property. The project raises public awareness, can be used in any neighbourhood across the country, and has a positive impact on water quality and quantity without major infrastructure expense.



Above: Residential Rainproofing Community Program, Riverdale Neighbourhood, Toronto, ON

Right: Bayview Glen Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Plan



Reconciliation and Landscape Architecture

The role of landscape architects in creating livable communities includes recognition of and commitment to the cultural importance of spaces and indigenous values.

Landscape architecture offers an interdisciplinary approach that considers our environment in a holistic manner. The principles and goals of landscape architecture in Canada are well aligned with many of the values of Canada's Indigenous cultures. Building on common goals and values, the CSLA Reconciliation Advisory Committee discussion paper identifies knowledge and relationship gaps around Indigenous issues within our profession. It recommends a staged action plan to guide the CSLA in improving awareness and capacity for supporting Canada's First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples through landscape architecture and land-use planning within our leadership, membership, and schools of landscape architecture.

Landscape architects have collaborated on various works across the country that respect and incorporate traditional knowledge. Consultation and engagement in support of Indigenous communities has contributed to self-determination and community-based land use planning and management..

One such example is the Kipekiskwaywinan: York Factory First Nation's Evaluation Report for the Keeyask generation Project. "Our Voices" is the culmination of a decade-long collaborative process for an environmental assessment of the Keeyask hydroelectric generation project.

In Saskatchewan, the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council initiated discussions with local community and governance groups to help preserve and sustain territorial lands all the while managing and encouraging aboriginal tourism. The resulting plan by landscape architects, The Qu'Appelle Valley Integrated Tourism Strategy, will help all communities to evolve for decades to come.

Greenwich Day Use Facility, Greenwich, Prince Edward Island



Moving Forward Collaboratively

The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects is committed to encouraging its membership to build solid bonds with communities across the country. This commitment means that the CSLA will support its membership:

- in the creation of equitable spaces that are developed collaboratively by teams and that have been formed through active community engagement
- in the creation of communities that are resilient and able to ensure the long-term sustainability of environments, cultures, and well-being
- in the creation of healthy communities that are functional, practical, and beautiful
- in recognizing and committing to the preservation of cultural and indigenous values, and spaces by realizing designs that acknowledge these values.



Above:
Yellowknife
Harbour, NWT

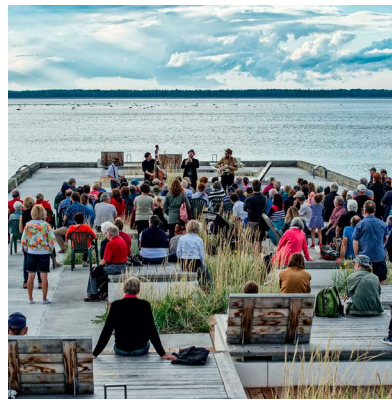
Right:
Kipekiskwaywinan:
Our Voices –
York Factory
First Nation



The projects described in this document have won a CSLA Award of Excellence. Learn more about our award winners online and experience through pictures the ever-expanding range of landscape architecture in Canada today.

The Awards of Excellence honour distinctive design, ground-breaking research, sustainable landscape management and much more. Landscape architects revitalize derelict inner-city shorelines and fashion pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. They build avant-garde residential gardens and turn brownfields into sustainable parks. They shape our urban landscapes, spearheading city-wide planning and design. Each year, jurors select exceptional projects across many areas of expertise.

www.csla-aapc.ca/awards/awards-atlas



The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) is a professional organization with landscape architect members, associate (or intern) members and landscape architecture student members. As the voice of the profession in Canada, the CSLA is an advocate for its members on issues such as urban design, urban renewal, sustainable development, climate change and cultural heritage.

Since it was founded in 1934, the CSLA has increased awareness and appreciation of landscape architecture and the vitality of the profession in Canada and throughout the world. The CSLA is dedicated to advancing the art, the science and the practice of landscape architecture.

www.csla-aapc.ca

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