

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

COMMITTEE MANUAL



Last Updated: 21 November 2018 (by Michelle Legault, CSLA Executive Director)

APPROVED BY THE CSLA BOARD ON 6 NOVEMBER 2018

Context

Volunteers are the backbone of the CSLA and committees are the structure through which our volunteers contribute. The work done by volunteers on committees makes it possible for the CSLA to achieve high levels of performance not otherwise possible.

The CSLA's Strategic Plan is a roadmap for the CSLA's objectives and strategies, providing the foundation for the CSLA's programs and activities. The CSLA's Committees play a key role in the achievement of the Strategic Plan, through its key programs, policies, and liaisons with other organizations.

In 2017, the CSLA undertook a Committee Review to address the number, complexity, and roles of the CSLA's working groups, task forces and committees. The review's objectives were:

- To better manage volunteer time
- To better manage the Executive Director's time
- To improve the link between committees and the board
- To better structure the committees
- To evaluate whether the correct committees were in place
- To better define the scope of the committees, and identify their timeline

This Committee Manual was developed as a result of the committee re-structuring.

Role and Function of CSLA Committees, Task Forces and Work Groups

Committees have an advisory function to the Board. The Board may from time to time establish committees with duties and powers as it deems to be in the interest of the Society.

Each committee shall be chaired by a director, have the committee membership and terms of reference approved by resolution of the Board, consider matters as are referenced to it by the Board, shall keep records of its activities and recommendations, and, shall report to the board at such intervals as require by the Board.

The composition of the committees shall be generally representative of the Board and, where possible and appropriate, include staff and members of the Society and of the community at large. This is an effective way to add expertise, involve more of the community in the work of the Society and bring to the Society a reflection of public opinion. It shall also serve as a means of recruiting, orienting and screening prospective candidates for the Board. Committees should aim to represent each category of CSLA membership, including fellows, students, associates, and full members. Calls to the members at large are encouraged to staff committees.

A committee's function is to bring the experience, expertise and judgment of an individual or group of interested and informed persons to bear on a specific area of the Society's responsibility. Its job is to assist the Board by considering matters referred to it in greater depth than would be possible by the whole Board. Committees, isolate the key issues requiring Board consideration, propose alternative actions, present the implications and make recommendations to the Board for decision. The Board will not review the matter in the same detail as the committee but must be satisfied that all pertinent information was considered or refer the issue back to the committee for further study. The Board will consider the recommendations of the committee and adopt or amend these recommendations or make such other disposition as it deems advisable.

Types of CSLA Committees

1. **Standing Committee:** Standing Committees are established by the CSLA and enshrined within the CSLA's By-laws. They must provide written reports at each Board meeting (please refer to the CSLA Board Meeting Report Template to be developed) Standing Committees are ongoing and provide written reports at each Board meeting.
2. **Committees:** Committees are established by the CSLA Board of Directors. Their scope of activity may be more global and have longer-term objectives related to the strategic plan. They are composed of a chair and 2-5 members who lead the activities of the committee.
3. **Task Forces or Working Groups:** Task forces and working groups can be established either by the Board or by the Committees to undertake short-term activities, initiatives or projects. The establishment of a task force would require approval of either the Board or the Committee under which it finds itself, or, a task force could also be established and managed directly by the Board. Typically, these would be short-term groups related to specific projects.

Terms of Reference

A terms of reference must be established for each committee, approved by the Board, and circulated to all committee members. Should be reviewed by the committee annually. The Terms of reference should include:

- Authority
- Mandate and Objectives
- Action Plan

Committee Notes and Format

Notes should be taken at every meeting on the *CSLA Meeting Report Template*.

To ensure meeting efficiency, the following format should be used:

- a) review previous action items, then
- b) discuss next steps or new business

Reporting

Each committee must provide a written report to the Board at each meeting or may report via the Executive Director's report.

Chair Appointments

The Committee Chair is appointed by the Board and may be comprised of Board members, staff, and/or Society members.

The CSLA's Committees

In November, 2018, the Board approved the following committee structure and areas of responsibility for the CSLA:

STANDING COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

- Strategic Plan
- Landscape Architecture Foundation Canada (LACF) Nominating Committee
- Government Relations and Advocacy

Landscape Architecture Accreditation Council (LAAC)

College of Fellows (COF)

Nominating Committee

Finance and Risk Management Committee

COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES AND WORK GROUPS

Reconciliation Advisory Committee (formerly the Indigenous Issues Task Force)

Membership Task Force

Committee on Climate Adaptation

Landscapes/Paysages Editorial Board

Public and Professional Relations Committee (formerly the Advocacy Task Force) (includes WLAM and Charter)

Congress Planning Committee

Awards of Excellence Committee

Governor General's Medal Jury

Canadian Landscape Standard Steering Group

Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System (LACES) Representatives

Invasive Species Working Group

EXTERNAL AFFILIATIONS

IFLA

President's Council

Component Presidents' Roundtable