

# LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

## FAQs



### What is landscape architecture?

As a profession that is broad in scope and scale, landscape architecture encompasses the analysis, design, management, planning, and stewardship of the natural and built environment. Landscape architects design well-planned livable communities, leading the way in initiatives such as neighborhood master plans, stormwater management and runoff, cutting-edge transportation corridors, and innovative green streets. Landscape architects have advanced education, professional training, specialized skills, and licensure by examination in 50 states.

### What are some examples of landscape architecture projects?

Landscape architects design site plans for commercial and residential properties, green infrastructure for water and stormwater management, plans for reclaiming blighted areas, public parks and trails, and historic preservation projects. In addition to local examples, well-known landscape architecture projects include Central Park in New York City; the multimodal transportation corridor of the Portland Mall in Portland, OR; the grounds of the U.S. Capitol and the resilient green roof of the U.S. Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C.; and Chicago's Millennium Park.

### How does landscape architecture licensure protect and promote public health, safety, and welfare?

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 homes and communities.

Key elements of landscape architecture practice that protect and promote public health safety and welfare are:

- proper design of public pathways, plazas, and terraces that promote safe passage for pedestrians
- appropriate design of public streets and corridors that assure safe utilization by automobiles and pedestrians
- correctly designed erosion and sediment control systems that protect and improve water quality
- accurately designed site lighting systems that promote safe uses of private and public streets, pathways, and spaces
- appropriate irrigation design that allows for the efficient use of water resources
- proper planning for resiliency, flooding and water-level rise, and protecting communities

### How does landscape architecture licensing compare to architects and engineers?

Landscape architects, architects, and engineers are all required to obtain a license to practice in each respective design profession. All 50 states require licensing of landscape architects. Each state sets its own licensing requirements consisting of a combination of education, experience, and examination. After successfully meeting the education, experience, and examination requirements, the individual applies for a license through the landscape architecture licensing board. This approach is similar to architects and engineers and can also vary from state to state.

## Why do landscape architects need to be licensed?

Professional licensure ensures the individual practicing landscape architecture is qualified to design projects affecting public health, safety, and welfare. Additionally, licensure provides imperative business opportunities that allow landscape architects to:

- compete with other out-of-state design professionals for in-state projects requiring licensed professionals
- compete with other in- and out-of-state design professionals for projects requiring licensed professionals
- be selected as the lead on design projects
- assure project sponsors, homeowners, and the general public that they are retaining an educated, experienced and qualified individual

## Does landscape architecture licensure affect young professionals and students?

Yes, to both. Emerging professionals in landscape architecture seek to settle and begin their careers and families in places where opportunities exist to build, lead, and grow a business and fairly compete for projects against other licensed design professionals. Additionally, landscape architecture education programs require internships under licensed design professionals. Therefore, students attend universities where there are local opportunities to intern under licensed landscape architects.

## What type of disciplinary action is imposed on individuals who practice landscape architecture without a license?

Landscape architecture licensing grievances are typically brought to the attention of the state licensing board by other licensed individuals, other agencies, or the general public. Disciplinary actions may include settlement agreement, fine, reprimand, probation, suspension, and license revocation.

## How is landscape architecture different from gardeners, landscapers, horticulturists, and landscape contractors?

**Landscape architects** are licensed individuals who analyze, plan, manage, and design projects such as transportation corridors, neighborhood master plans, water and stormwater management systems, and public parks and trails. All of these can significantly affect the public's health, safety, and welfare.

**Gardeners and landscape designers** focus primarily on fundamental garden design and maintenance. Landscape designers usually do not have an advanced degree and are not a licensed professional in most states although they may be society certified by the American Society of Landscape Designers.

**Horticulturists** are trained in the science of growing and producing plants. Many horticulturists become nurserymen or work in garden centers. Some horticulturists become society certified by their state nursery and landscape associations.

**Landscape contractors** install planting elements of design conceived by landscape architects. Landscape contractors may be gardeners or landscapers. Most landscape contractors are registered contractors in their respective states or local jurisdictions.

For more information visit [asla.org](http://asla.org)



American Society of Landscape Architects



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