Architectural Landscaping Meeting Kit

DEFINITION – LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Landscape architecture involves the planning, design, management, and nurturing of the built and natural environments. With their unique skill set, landscape architects work to improve human and environmental health in all communities.

Landscape architects are involved in the designing of spaces that “creates and enables life between the buildings”. The involvement of landscape architects can be seen in streets, roads, shared paths, housing estates, apartment compounds, shopping malls, squares, plazas, gardens, pocket parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, memorials, museums, schools, universities, transport networks, regional parks, national parks, forests, waterways and across towns, cities and countries. Landscape architects often go beyond design creating frameworks and policies for place and city shaping that enable citizens and government to create better places for all.

SAFETY IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Landscape Architecture is much more than a drawing board with creative ideas. It encompasses many aspects of proper planning and design with implementation of those plans wrapped up with proper follow through to ensure the customer is completely satisfied with the finished product and service. Often overlooked in the name of profits is safety. Look at a scenario that is commonplace like shoring. What should be of utmost importance when undertaking a job that requires workers to be in a trench is preventing the soil from shifting and moving in thereby trapping the worker(s). When proper hydraulic shoring jacks are used, worker safety is a priority and the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the job is sure to improve thereby ending with a finished product and

service that at least meets if not exceeds the customer's expectations and company profits as well.

Safety should never be ignored no matter how small or big the project.

KEY INGREDIENTS IN ARCHITECTURAL LANDSCAPE

Have the proper PPE. Personal protective equipment (PPE) prevents injuries. Sturdy work boots protect your feet from cutting blades and crushing injuries from large equipment and heavy landscape materials. Gloves protect your hands from scrapes, cuts, and punctures. Impact-resistant safety glasses and/or face shields protect your eyes from flying debris and UV lenses can offer further protection from the sun. Earplugs and earmuffs prevent hearing loss from loud equipment.

Know and respect the tools and equipment. Power equipment used to shape the landscape such as trenchers, tillers, and bobcats can cause serious injury and death if not used properly. Read the instructions and get training on the equipment you use. Know where the moving, cutting, and rotating parts are and keep clear of them. Inspect power equipment before each use to ensure guards and safety switches work properly. Never leave running power equipment unattended.

Maintain good housekeeping on the jobsite. Store materials properly where they will not cause slip, trip, and fall hazards or engulf workers. When you move heavy materials around the jobsite, use mechanical lifting devices or use a team to lift items. Secure loads so they don't shift positions while you lift them. Keep items close to your body and lift with your legs, not your back.

Remember the elements. Know basic first aid and keep a first aid kit on the jobsite to treat minor injuries. Have shade available and stay hydrated to avoid heat illness. Layers of clothing help you respond to changes in the temperature. Wear sunscreen, a hat, and long pants and shirts to protect your skin from sun exposures.

SECURITY AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The implementation of good design principles and security requirements are not mutually exclusive.

A variety of site features and amenities from the landscape architectural palette can be used to provide the required level of security. The manipulation of landforms, integration of water features, raised planters, vegetation, changes in elevation of paved areas, fences, a wide range of street furniture, site elements and amenities (bollards, benches, flagpoles, kiosks, etc) can all be strategically implemented to enhance security. These site design features can be used to restrict and control pedestrian and vehicular circulation and access as well as prevent unwanted surveillance. They must be carefully located as to not impede pedestrian access to public entrances, disrupt the flow of pedestrian traffic along the sidewalk, or prevent access by emergency vehicles. Their creative use can result in spaces that are responsive to the needs of the people that use them, creating active public spaces overflowing with positive activity. This level of positive activity brings with it an inherent safety and security in the form of informal surveillance and makes undesirable activity stand out in a much more obvious way.

FINAL WORD

To give you an idea of the influence landscape architecture has in the USA – the average individual public sector landscape architect will effect close to 4 million acres and 5 million people in a year alone. It’s fair to say their work directly impacts the spaces we encounter on a regular basis.