

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (1964, R1984, R2001*, R2008)



Policy Statement

The American Society of Landscape Architects believes that an open, participatory design process can create better communities and a healthier environment. Public involvement will help identify the issues important to the community and develop the most appropriate planning, design, and management solutions. The quality of a community's culture, buildings, monuments, infrastructure, and parks reflects on its civic pride and values. Projects that contribute to the public realm should have a lasting positive effect on both the community and the environment. Therefore, ASLA supports the engagement of the public and stakeholders in all phases of the process.

Rationale

All members of the public should be encouraged to participate during the preparation of a plan for projects that contribute to the public realm. Public involvement will help identify the issues important to the community in developing a wider range of planning and design solutions. This open public involvement process builds support for implementing the plan and increases the likelihood of long-term success since the participants have a stake in the process.

Most public officials lack formal training in planning and aesthetic matters and rely on the skills of professional consultants to produce good planning and design. In many cases, use of advisory committees including qualified design experts, whose purpose is to render opinions on the artistic merits of such proposals, is helpful. Review by such a committee should include site selection and design of any publicly-owned improvement such as public buildings; memorials; bridges and highways; playgrounds and parks; and proposals for major alterations to existing projects.

* Replaces Art Commissions and Other Reviewing Authorities Policy.