

# EMERGENCE

ASLA Associate Advisory Committee's Newsletter

September 2020



American Society of  
Landscape Architects

## Introduction to ASLA's Climate Action Committee

In response to calls for more action on climate change from members and students, ASLA formed the Climate Action Committee (CAC) in 2020. It's mission? The CAC "provides input to ASLA leadership on strategies for communicating the role of landscape architecture in mitigating climate change. The committee will explore, develop, and promote programs, products, and services that provide research data and learning opportunities to practitioners" (from the Committees and Affiliations Charge Sheets).

## CAC Initiatives

Building a Climate Action Network through ASLA Committees, Chapters, & Universities. The CAC is working to bring climate change mitigation solutions to the fore across the other working groups at ASLA. The Associate Advisory Committee and the Student Advisory Committee both have liaisons as active members of the CAC. The goal is to increase communication and cross-pollination between groups. Currently, the committee is organizing teams of chapter, student chapter, and university program leaders to host a series of regional conversations aimed at addressing climate change issues most pressing to specific regions of the country, such as drought and fire in the west and sea level rise on the coasts. The conversations bring together practitioners, educators, and students, with the goal of building a Climate Action Network within our membership and beyond.

## Happy Hours and Webinars

On August 11, President Wendy Miller, FASLA presented an overview of ASLA and member-led initiatives that address the climate crisis, including initiatives by the Climate Action Committee, legislative wins, and practice tools like SITES and the Climate Positive Design Challenge. The recording is now available for [on-demand viewing](#).

The CAC is holding a series of Happy Hour video calls to build connections around these important issues. In August, the CAC hosted its first happy hour, focused on how ASLA can respond to and help shape the Green New Deal, a set of congressional resolutions put forward in 2019. The CAC wanted to hear from landscape architects to understand what they want to see in a Green New Deal, how ASLA might help create and pass legislation, and ultimately how landscape architecture can be at the forefront of Green New Deal projects. The next Happy Hour will focus on student participation in the [Green New Deal Superstudio](#) sponsored by the Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF), the McHarg Center, the Center for Resilient Cities and Landscapes, the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA), and ASLA.

## New Networks

The CAC is developing new networks to increase the reach and effectiveness of landscape architects. One new network is an orbit of related organizations for collaboration and enhanced awareness of the work that landscape architects do to address the impacts of climate change. As mentioned above, a Climate Action Network is being developed for information exchange and collaboration.

## Climate Positive Design Challenge

The Climate Positive Design Challenge was started by CAC member Pamela Conrad, ASLA and launched in 2019. Here, climate positive means that the site should sequester more carbon than it took to build. The "Challenge" is to design projects to remove more carbon from the atmosphere than they emit within a set number of years: plazas and streetscapes within 20 years and parks and other mixed-use type projects in 5 years. To log a project, designers fill out questions about the selected materials, square footage, and vegetation of the site on the Pathfinder App. Pathfinder is a free online landscape carbon calculator that educates designers on how to reduce carbon footprints and sequester more carbon. New features of the updated Pathfinder include capability to compare design alternatives, analyze existing conditions, understand site impacts, and more customization. More than 1,300 projects have been logged to date! Learn more at <https://climatepositivedesign.com/challenge/>

Join the upcoming [ASLA webinar on September 30, 2:00pm ET, with Pamela Conrad for a discussion and Q&A addressing Climate Positive Design's Pathfinder tool version 2.0](#), and how your firm can step up to the challenge of creating climate positive projects by reducing carbon footprints and increasing sequestration in the places we design. [Register now.](#)



Image: Sen. Ed Markey and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez Speak About the Green New Deal, From Senate Democrats on Flickr

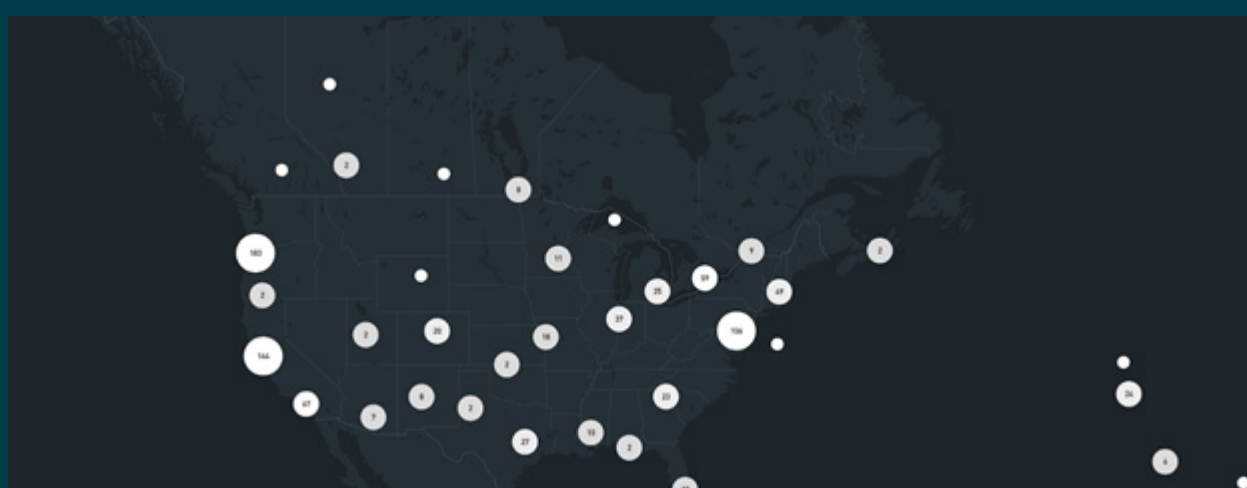


Image: Map of Locations of Logged Climate Positive Design Projects, From Climatepositivedesign.com

## Looking Ahead

Oct 5 - [ASkLA Podcast Release](#)  
Oct 14 - [Student's Guide to Environmental Justice Webinar](#)  
Oct 19 - [ASkLA Podcast Release](#)

Questions?  
202-898-2444  
[chapters@asla.org](mailto:chapters@asla.org)



@AmericanSocietyofLandscapeArchitects



@NationalASLA  
#studentasla



@NationalASLA