

## **INSIGHTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Sustainable development is a crucial challenge that our current and future generations must strive to achieve. The tenets of the landscape architecture profession espouse sustainable development. This framework is a procedure by which landscape architects can begin to address sustainable development through design. Landscape architects are well suited to be advocates and contributors to sustainable design.

Landscape architecture should be a leading profession in the sustainable development paradigm. While this does present a challenge, it also affords a unique opportunity to further the knowledge of our profession and to truly be stewards of the land by protecting the safety, health, and welfare of everyone and everything. As a means of advocating the design of sustainable development and addressing topics set forth in ASLA's Declaration on Environment and Development, a sustainable development framework that is composed of Economic, Social, and Environmental issues and is applicable at different scales was developed.

The framework incorporates areas of Research, Analysis, Design and Evaluation and is a learning procedure for achieving sustainable development. Applying the framework in the re-design of the Top-of-the-World (TOW) community, offered the opportunity to assess the frameworks' shortcomings and its successes.

### **Shortcomings**

A shortcoming of the framework is that it is information dependent. Important data and information that may be needed to implement the analysis and the design considerations may not be readily available. Sometimes information is difficult to find in a usable format for a landscape architect without generating the data first hand. However, as the information age progresses, more information for a wider range of places are becoming available.

## Successes

The sequencing of the sustainable development framework is similar to the design process and this allows for ease of use by a landscape architect. The framework is not meant to provide an answer or be prescriptive. Rather, it is to aid the designer's decision making. The framework is flexible. Similar to the design process, the framework allows creative freedom to the designer to develop unique solutions. The framework provides considerations, how the designer chooses to address these considerations is a design choice.

The framework is expandable. The framework can be expanded to include/remove analysis/design considerations or to include new technologies, tools, approaches, and so on. For example, if through research and application it is determined that an alternative evaluation method such as Sustainable Development Indicators<sup>i</sup> or the Ecological Footprint Method<sup>ii</sup> is needed then these could be implemented.

The framework is web-based. Being part of the information superhighway is a success. ASLA, the professions organization, is making an effort to explore the potential of the digital world and there is much potential to begin to establish a host of information that is available to a wide range of landscape architects around the world.

Timothy Beatley wrote, "Design professions must make sustainable communities the single organizing concept of planning now and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (Beatley, 1993). This thesis and the framework developed as part of the thesis addresses and develop solutions that are congruent with sustainable development and the tenets of the profession. The sustainable development framework is a procedure for landscape architects to learn about sustainable development and enables them to incorporate sustainable development into their designs.

Landscape architecture has the opportunity to assert itself on a broad scale, to truly be stewards of the land, and protect the future health, safety, and welfare of the people, animals, and the landscapes that we inhabit.

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<sup>i</sup> Sustainable Development Indicators

Indicators are increasing in use and in popularity for the purpose of measuring sustainability. The United Nations Commission on Environment and Development (UNCED) requested that sustainable development indicators be included as part of Agenda 21 (Moffatt, 1999).

<sup>ii</sup> The Ecological Footprint

The Ecological Footprint method, developed by William Reese and his colleagues, provides an area-based index of a population's ecological load (Reese et al, 1996). This method would provide an additional evaluation technique that could quantify designs. Comparing the results of the evaluation techniques would allow for refinement of the framework.

For more information and examples of this method click this link.

[The Ecological Footprint](#)