



University of Colorado
Denver

May 26, 2016

Saul Larsen, Policy Analyst
Office of Policy, Research, and Regulatory Reform
Executive Director's Office
Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies
1560 Broadway, Suite 1550
Denver CO 80202

RE: Colorado Landscape Architect Licensure Sunset Review

Dear Mr. Larsen,

On behalf of the University of Colorado Denver's Master of Landscape Architecture program, we are writing to express our support for continued regulation and licensure of the landscape architecture profession in the state of Colorado.

CU Denver offers the foremost professional graduate program in Landscape Architecture in Colorado. The Master of Landscape Architecture program's professionally accredited degree includes both a two-year post-professional track for students who hold design degrees from accredited undergraduate programs in landscape architecture or architecture, and a three-year professional degree for students entering the profession from diverse undergraduate backgrounds. The Master of Landscape Architecture program was initiated in 1976 and became accredited in 1981. Throughout its forty years, the program has experienced steady growth in enrollment of Colorado residents, non-residents and international students.

CU Denver's Master of Landscape Architecture program provides an issues-based, immersive curriculum supporting design, scholarly research and service in the discipline and practice of landscape architecture. Our teaching, research and community outreach focus on pressing issues to address health, well-being, and environmental resilience through design in the public realm. Current issues of focus across the curriculum include damaged sites and environmental justice; water scarcity and resilient infrastructure; and food equity and social justice. Our students graduate equipped with skills and abilities to positively impact our built environment and become leaders for the evolving profession.

Many of our alumni go on to practice landscape architecture in the most populated regions in the state, region and nation. However, if the profession was deregulated in Colorado these students who aspire to become licensed landscape architects would have to leave the state to earn licensure. A requirement of licensure is to work under the supervision of a licensed landscape architect. Deregulation would put students in CU Denver's (as well as those students attending our sister institution, Colorado State University) at a competitive disadvantage compared to those enrolled in any of the 67 universities across the country that offer accredited landscape architecture degrees in states that require licensure.

Trends in employment indicate a significant need for greater numbers of licensed landscape architects nationwide. Colorado has an increasing population which will contribute to this growing demand for licensed landscape architects. CU Denver is currently well-positioned to meet this demand both locally and nationally through growth in enrollment. Today our program has over seventy students pursuing accredited degrees which lead to professional licensure in landscape architecture. One of the strengths of the CU Denver program is the robust landscape architecture industry in the region. Our students can secure internships in nationally and internationally recognized firms with office's in the state and the program can hire adjunct faculty and lecturers from among the recognized leaders in the professional community of landscape architects. This exchange is essential to creating a well-informed, innovative and economically secure professional community. Deregulation would compromise this exchange because both internship opportunities for students and the pool of qualified landscape architects available to teach would be reduced.

Licensure, which is regulated by the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies, ensures the protection of the health, safety and welfare of Colorado citizens and businesses that have property in the state. Deregulation of the profession would undermine the existing protections to private and public landscapes. It would also stimulate a decline in the number of landscape architecture firms in the state, since those entering the profession will have no incentive to move to or remain in Colorado. Both municipalities and the private sector would therefore have to hire licensed landscape architects from out of state in order to ensure the protection of their investments. Another alternative would be to rely on unlicensed practitioners and trust that they have the skills, knowledge and abilities needed to protect facilities from damage and ensure the public's health, safety and welfare is not compromised.

We urge you to maintain the licensing structure for the profession of landscape architecture in Colorado. It's good for the state's economic growth and essential to continuing to create desirable, sustainable and economically viable communities in Colorado.

Sincerely,



digital signature

Ann Komara
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Landscape Architecture
Director, Master of Urban Design Program
Ann.komara@ucdenver.edu
303-315-2428