



## Notice to Members: ASLA Colorado Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

March 24, 2020

### Summary

This notice provides information about how ASLA Colorado is responding to the pandemic, our plans for the next few weeks and months, and links to useful resources about health, remote work, virtual practice and business assistance.

### Health and safety guide our actions

ASLA Colorado's primary concern is for the health and safety of our members, volunteers, staff, and the partners and colleagues with whom we work and interact. Given the global context and local impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation is fluid and changing rapidly. It will likely get worse before it gets better. Many norms have been disrupted and will likely be for some time. The health and safety of you and your loved ones is paramount. With this in mind, the Chapter is adapting to the new environment and implementing a series of actions that reflect the principles of the organization, incorporate health and safety concerns, and help to build a supportive community.

We know that the coronavirus and its impacts are quickly and deeply affecting every member of our community in profound ways, and the virus is bringing in to question how people occupy open spaces. The need for healthy outdoor spaces, large and small, is as vital now as ever. We hope you find the resources and information below useful as we navigate these difficult times together.

### Federal, State and ASLA guidance

For your reference, here are links to the current government health guidelines regarding COVID-19:

The Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/>

Colorado Department of Health: <https://covid19.colorado.gov>

Wyoming Department of Health: <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/infectious-disease-epidemiology-unit/disease/novel-coronavirus/>

And from ASLA National: <https://www.asla.org/ContentDetail.aspx?id=57225>

### The Chapter's response to the pandemic

Given the current health concerns, social distancing protocols and restrictions on daily life resulting from the growing pandemic, ASLA Colorado's Executive Committee (ExComm) is developing ways to connect virtually, in smaller groups and in less intensive ways this spring, ideally outdoors when possible. This is also an opportunity for us to develop ideas we had begun to discuss before the crisis — including more robust and inclusive ways to engage our widely dispersed professional community via online meetings and other virtual means.

Some of the activities we have been considering:

- Online do-it-yourself sketch crawl events
- Zoom-based panel discussions about topics of interest
- Zoom-based ExComm meetings available to all members (the meetings have always been open, now could be more accessible)

### **The Chapter's actions and current plans**

- The Chapter does not have any face-to-face meetings for members planned until our Annual Gathering in September. We are still doing business, holding conference calls and planning meetings via videoconference, and providing our members with information and resources. We will reevaluate plans for the Annual Gathering as the situation develops.
- The Chapter acquired a Zoom videoconference account and held our first Zoom-based ExComm meeting on March 17. We will hold all our monthly ExComm and other chapter business meetings via Zoom for the foreseeable future. Our awards review team is currently using Zoom to meet and judge awards submissions for the Central States Chapter (Nebraska and the Dakotas).
- The April 24-25, 2020 spring meetings of the Board of Trustees and Chapter President's Council, previously planned for Washington, D.C. will be transformed into a virtual meeting.
- Updates on chapter events will be posted on the chapter website, and included in the weekly e-notice.

### **A call for your ideas**

We are looking for other ways to support you. Whether you're a student or seasoned professional, solo practitioner or owner of a larger firm, from the eastern plains and Front Range to the Western Slope, from Durango to Jackson and beyond, we want to hear from you. How can ASLA Colorado support you and your practice during this uncertain time?

Please share with us your needs and ideas. If you have questions about our efforts, suggestions for connecting, convening and building our community in other ways, and/or thoughts on how ASLA Colorado might help you individually, as well as our larger industry, please send your thoughts and ideas to: [info@aslacolorado.org](mailto:info@aslacolorado.org).

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

We realize in these difficult times that you may be at home looking for ways to continue your personal growth and enhance business stability. ASLA Colorado can help! Below are a few resources we have collected. (With thanks to the Boston Chapter (BSLA) and others on the Chapter President's Council Basecamp online discussion group for their resources, messaging, ideas, and inspiration).

We plan to add to this list and update as needed:

#### ***Working Remotely***

- ARCHITECTURE FIRMS AND REMOTE WORK - A Boston Society of Architects webinar of 3/17/20: Link to video recording of discussion (including slides): <https://youtu.be/20g3RouSBTg>  
Link to slides only: [https://www.architects.org/uploads/Virtual-Program\\_Slides\\_03172020.pdf](https://www.architects.org/uploads/Virtual-Program_Slides_03172020.pdf)
- REMOTE WORKFLOWS & COLLABORATION From the BSA. The Boston Design Museum held this webinar on March 20. BSLA will be adding the link to the webinar, when available, here: <https://bslanow.org/uncategorized/new-to-remote-work-links-and-resources/>
- BEST PRACTICES FOR ZOOM MEETINGS - A one-page guide from the University of Minnesota: <https://it.umn.edu/zoom-best-practices-in-meeting-one-page>
- AIA COLORADO - Is Now (Finally) the Time for Architects to Phone It In? by Lauren Dundon, AIA: <https://aiacolorado.org/is-now-finally-the-time-for-architects-to-phone-it-in/>

- [How to Have More Meaningful and Effective Virtual Meetings](#), an article by Mia Scharphie, the landscape architecture-trained change agent and founder of Build Yourself Workshop. (Mia has worked remotely and has coached professionally for years. Her [blog](#) includes additional resources.)

### **Virtual Practice**

- [An Architects Guide to Virtual Practice](#), by the AIA Trust.

### **Continuing Education**

- The Landscape Architecture Continuing Education System (LACES) has hundreds of online distance education sessions available on their website – select “Search for Distance Education courses only”: <https://laces.asla.org>

### **Business Assistance**

#### **FEDERAL RESOURCES**

- The U.S. Small Business Association is offering [Coronavirus Small Business Guidance and Loan Resources](#). Colorado businesses are eligible to apply for loan assistance.

#### **REGIONAL RESOURCES**

- Colorado COVID-19 Business Resource Center, including SBA loan information: <https://choosecolorado.com/covid19/>
- Denver Small Business Emergency Relief Fund: <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/environmental-health/news/coronavirus-info/support-services/small-business-emergency-relief-program-form.html>  
This program offers cash grants of up to \$7,500 to businesses in industries particularly hard-hit by the coronavirus. Grants will be distributed monthly, and the first applications will be due March 31.
- From the Small Business Majority advocacy group:  
Colorado resources for Small Businesses- <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/resources/covid-19-colorado-resources>  
and national resources: <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/resources/covid-19-national-resources>

### **Mental Health**

- A column from the Colorado Sun about community, creativity and compassion: <https://coloradosun.com/2020/03/22/colorado-coronavirus-covid-loneliness-compassion-opinion/>
- Mental health coping strategies from the National Alliance on Mental Illness: <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/March-2020/Coronavirus-Mental-Health-Coping-Strategies>

### **Colorado News and Data**

- There are many news sources out there. This from the Colorado Sun online newspaper provides up-to-date concise data and information about COVID-19 in Colorado, including a map of cases, official orders, resources to get and give assistance, etc.: <https://coloradosun.com/coronavirus/>

### **Some final thoughts**

As we navigate these days of astonishing change and uncertainty, we write on behalf of the Chapter's Executive Committee to express our support for you. Every aspect of our profession and those who work with us is affected. Students and faculty, working parents and employers, emerging professionals to seasoned practitioners, small businesses to global practices and product suppliers and builders, every segment of our industry, and indeed our whole society, is undergoing an extraordinary transformation in multiple ways, often causing stress and anxiety.

A core strength of a professional association like ours is the ability to connect with one another and convene to celebrate and to share knowledge. As each of us and each business seeks a path through this new terrain, we believe that the need to engage and support our landscape community is essential. In the coming weeks, we will be working on new ways to do so and invite your suggestions.

As you know, our profession of landscape architecture was born out of a response to the public health crises of the 19th century. The need for landscapes at all scales that perform, restore, and inspire is as vital now as ever. Thank you for the work that you do. We are grateful to be part of your community.

Be safe. Be well. We are all in this together,

Jon Romero, ASLA, President

David Sprunt, ASLA, President-Elect

Greg Williams, Affiliate ASLA, Executive Director