

**TOPIC:                    PROPOSAL TO OFFER A MASTER OF LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE DEGREE BY COLORADO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

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**I.        SUMMARY**

Colorado State University, College of Agricultural Sciences has submitted a proposal for a Master of Landscape Architecture degree.

The Master of Landscape Architecture degree program prepares individuals for the full range of activities involved in the practice of landscape architecture.<sup>1</sup> Emphasis is given to developing mastery of design through a series of intensive design studios that investigate the range of landscape scales that characterize the practice. The course of study extends the base of knowledge of the field through graduate study. It provides those with professional competence with the opportunity to advance their theoretical and analytical skills.

**II.        BACKGROUND**

The following is summarized from Colorado State University's proposal to offer a Master of Landscape Architecture degree.

Landscape architecture is in a period of renewed visibility and relevance around the world due to many factors. Gardens, parks and public outdoor spaces, as well as extensive recreational areas, are under the purview of landscape architecture. The scope of practice is expanding to include large-scale public works, infrastructures, post-industrial brown field sites, landfills, urbanizing sectors of cities and even marginal leftover spaces. Landscape architects need to acquire an ever-growing body of skills – conceptual and imaginative as well as technical and managerial.<sup>2</sup>

**ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT:**

The Master's Degree in Landscape Architect supports the role and mission of Colorado State University. The statutory mission of CSU is

*to be a comprehensive graduate research university with selective admission standards offering a comprehensive array of baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degree programs. Consistent with the tradition of the land grant universities, Colorado state university has exclusive authority to offer graduate and undergraduate programs in agriculture, forestry, natural resources and veterinary medicine. The Colorado commission on higher education, in consultation with the board of governors of the*

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<sup>1</sup> CSU MLA proposal page 1.

<sup>2</sup> CSU MLA proposal page 2.

*Colorado state university system shall designate those graduate level programs that are the primary responsibility of Colorado state university.*<sup>3</sup>

This degree program is consistent with the tradition of land grant universities and supports the requirement to offer graduate programs in agriculture, forestry and natural resources. Objectives of the proposed program include providing an educational setting responsive to the needs of the environment, society, and the profession of landscape architecture as well as providing flexibility to students with their choice specialization or diversification within the profession. This degree program satisfies the requirement to “provide high quality graduate education programs” and is relevant to specific goals in the university’s strategic plan.

**EVIDENCE OF NEED FOR THE PROGRAM:**

The need for the program is inherent in the wide array of problems that require well-informed landscape design and planning solutions. This is particularly true in Colorado and surrounding states, which continue to face major issues related to growth, development, land use change, and quality of life. The Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate that the demand for professional landscape architecture services will expand from 18% to 26% by 2014. To meet this projected demand, the number of graduates from landscape architecture programs must grow at least six percent each year.

**EVIDENCE OF STUDENT DEMAND:**

Projected numbers of student demand are based on requests for information about the opportunity for graduate study in landscape architecture. Although there have not been formal surveys, experience over the years shows an increasing demand. Continually, the staff at the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture field several inquiries per week from individuals seeking a graduate program such as this. An additional indication of student demand is that the program at the University of Colorado-Denver enrolls 50 students and does not admit all who apply.

**ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

Individuals who have completed a four-year undergraduate degree are eligible for admission to the program. Preference for admission is given to individuals who have completed a balanced undergraduate education. Preparation in the visual arts is strongly advised. Those with an undergraduate major outside the professional design fields may be admitted to the program, but will need to complete background courses as determined by the Landscape Architecture Graduate Committee.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> C.R.S. 23-31-101. CSU statutory authority to offer graduate masters level programs.

<sup>4</sup> CSU MLA proposal page 4.

**III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

The Department staff has reviewed this proposed program and letters of assurances from academic administrators to ensure that the degree program meets the State's performance measures outlined in C.R.S. 23-5-129.6.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Commission approve the Master of Landscape Architecture degree submitted by Colorado State University.**

**V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S. 23-5-129.6

**VI. ACCOMPANYING MATERIALS**

The program proposal materials are attached.