

THE DESIGNER

Landscape Ontario
DESIGNERS SECTOR

Issue 3
Summer/Fall 2026



Image by Eli Paddle generated using Nano Banana.



Welcome to the fall edition of *The Designer*!

Landscape design has never been more exciting — or more demanding. Our profession continues to evolve, blending creativity with technology, environmental stewardship, construction expertise and a lifelong commitment to learning. The best designers never stop asking questions, exploring new ideas or challenging the way they've always done things.

In this edition, we dive into the many sides of the design profession. From the growing role of native landscapes to the journey of becoming a Certified Landscape Designer, you'll discover ideas, insights and experiences that reflect the passion and dedication behind great design.

While technology transforms the way we work, one thing remains unchanged: people learn best from people. Mentorship highlights the importance of sharing knowledge, building confidence and strengthening our design community through meaningful connections.

Whether you're a seasoned professional, working toward certification or just beginning your journey, I hope you'll find ideas that inspire you, challenge you and help you continue sharpening your design edge.

Thank you for being a valuable part of our growing community of landscape designers. Together, we're supporting each other to become stronger professionals, grow better businesses and create a brighter future for our profession.

Lexi Dearborn, CLD
Landscape Ontario Sector Group Chair

THE DESIGNER

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The Designer is an initiative of Landscape Ontario's Landscape Designers Sector Group — comprised of member volunteers who promote and advocate the expertise and services of those within the sector and provide education, networking and learning opportunities to both members and non-members with the goal of elevating the profession. Learn more about this and other Designer Sector Group initiatives and events [online](#).

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Feature

Designing for smaller landscapes

By John Bright, CLD

As urbanization increases and available land becomes more limited, smaller front and backyards are becoming the norm. These compact spaces often come with challenges such as poor grading, limited privacy and tight footprints. Yet with thoughtful planning, they also present an exciting opportunity to create functional, beautiful outdoor environments that make the most of every square foot. Here are key strategies for designing the shrinking landscape.



Think big

It may seem counterintuitive, but thinking big can make a small space feel larger. Introducing a few substantial elements, such as a specimen tree or bold structural shrub, adds height, texture and depth. Large-format pavers or slabs laid in simple patterns can visually expand a yard. On long, narrow lots, a running bond pattern helps widen the space.

Pairing oversized plantings with simplified hardscaping creates depth and reduces visual clutter. If privacy is a concern, tall or wide screening elements can immediately define boundaries while enhancing the perceived scale of the yard.

Go up

Vertical design is essential in small landscapes. Using height not only draws the eye upward but also increases functional space.

Pergolas and trellises: These structures help define outdoor rooms with shape and intention. A pergola supporting climbing plants introduces greenery overhead without enclosing the space too heavily.

Overhead beams and bespoke structures: Canopies, beams and custom-built vertical elements add dimension, create layered sightlines and provide opportunities for integrated lighting or hanging planters. These additions build a sense of enclosure without sacrificing openness.

Layered, impactful planting

A lush, layered landscape can make even the smallest garden feel generous and immersive.

Foreground, mid-ground and background: Organize plants by

> Continued



height to create depth. Ground covers and small perennials form the foreground, while mid-sized shrubs and grasses add movement and texture. Taller trees or feature plants anchor the background and guide the eye upward.

Variety and texture: Mixing plants with varied leaf forms, textures and bloom times ensures year-round interest. Think evergreen structure paired with seasonal perennials, or soft ferns against architectural grasses. The goal is richness without overwhelming the space.

Colour as a tool

Thoughtful use of colour can dramatically influence how a compact space feels. Dark-stained or painted fences — especially in black or charcoal — can make boundaries appear to recede, creating a sense of infinity.

Colour can also be introduced through paving patterns, material choices like Corten steel or natural stone, or subtle accents in furniture and planters. When used strategically, colour becomes a design tool to shift perception and enhance atmosphere.

Outdoor rooms

Creating outdoor “rooms” is essential in small landscapes. These purposeful zones make a limited space feel organized and multifunctional.

Defined spaces: Use materials such as decking, pavers or gravel to visually separate areas for dining, lounging or gardening. Even slight changes in material or layout signal a transition.

Pathways: Meandering paths or stepping stones add intrigue, guiding movement and creating moments of discovery that make the space feel larger.

Functional furniture: Choose pieces scaled to the

space and, when possible, are multifunctional. Built-in benches, storage seating or custom solutions minimize clutter and maximize usability.

Sound and sensory design

Sound plays a subtle but powerful role in shaping the atmosphere. It can soften urban noise and help a small landscape feel more enveloping.

Water features: Even a compact fountain or trickling water element introduces a calming ambience. Sound carries through the space, drawing visitors in and creating an illusion of expansiveness.

High-end details in small spaces

One of the advantages of designing small landscapes is the ability to invest in premium materials or bespoke features that may be less feasible in larger areas.

Premium materials: Natural stone, high-end pavers or composite woods elevate the aesthetic and offer long-term durability.

Unique features: Small spaces shine with custom furniture, sculptural pieces or distinctive lighting. These elements create focal points and add a luxurious, curated feel.

By embracing these strategies, designers can transform even the smallest landscapes into inviting, functional retreats. Through thoughtful planting, intentional structure and the strategic use of materials, a compact outdoor space can feel expansive, immersive and undeniably memorable.

Known for crafting modern, forward-thinking outdoor spaces with a refined approach to small-scale living, John Bright is a Certified Landscape Designer based in London, Ont. As the owner and principal designer of BRIGHT design studio, he leads the creation of high-end, thoughtfully curated landscapes designed for real living.



Client Focus

When messy becomes meaningful: Redefining the natural garden

By Ron Koudys, CLD, FCSLA, FASLA, RLA, OALA

“Can you make it look natural but not messy?”

Every landscape designer has heard this request. Homeowners love the idea of a natural garden until they picture their neighbour’s weed patch. For decades, our collective sense of what a “good” garden looks like has been built on control: trimmed hedges, mulched beds, tidy lawns and perfect edges. But as our understanding of ecology deepens, the definition of beauty in the residential landscape is changing. Natural no longer means neglected. It means alive.

The cult of control

The modern suburban garden was born from a desire for order. Post-war neighbourhoods celebrated the pristine front lawn as a mark of respectability. Everything was neat, predictable and well-behaved. My father was so proud of having the best lawn in the neighbourhood. Designers reinforced this aesthetic by framing every bed with boxwood, clipping every shrub into submission and choosing plants that promised obedience over resilience. But as climate change, water scarcity and biodiversity loss

dominate the headlines, many homeowners are rethinking what their yards say about them. The perfect lawn no longer feels like a badge of pride; it feels out of step with the times. Younger homeowners in particular are asking for gardens that contribute to the environment, not just decorate it. They want life, not just looks.

A new kind of beauty

Naturalistic design does not mean letting chaos reign. In fact, successful natural gardens are highly intentional. The goal is to capture the spirit of nature’s patterns: its rhythm, texture and diversity, without descending into disorder. The key lies in legibility: the garden must read as designed, even when it feels wild.

A naturalistic planting might use sweeping drifts of native grasses and perennials — echinacea, prairie dropseed, bluestem, goldenrod and milkweed — arranged to echo the movement of wind or the fall of light. Repetition and flow replace symmetry and straight lines. Strong structural elements such as a path, a stone wall or even a mown

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edge frame the composition and reassure the eye that the garden is intentional.

As designer Piet Oudolf famously said, “A plant is only beautiful when it’s in the right place.” That single idea sums up this new aesthetic. Each plant plays a role in the ecosystem as well as in the composition. Together they create a living picture that changes with the seasons: lush and vibrant in summer, sculptural and textural in winter.

From boxwood to biodiversity

Replacing clipped evergreens with dynamic plant communities is not just a style choice, it’s an ecological one. Native plants evolved alongside our local insects and birds, forming relationships that exotic ornamentals simply can’t replicate. Deep-rooted natives improve soil structure, increase infiltration and tolerate drought. They reduce the need for irrigation, fertilizer and mowing.

The result is a garden that gives back. It provides food and shelter for pollinators, captures carbon and filters runoff before it reaches storm sewers. And perhaps most importantly, it reconnects homeowners with the cycles of life right outside their windows.

Ironically, the most sustainable gardens often become the most beautiful. Their appeal comes not from perfection but from participation: from the buzz of bees in July, the movement of grasses in the wind and the soft rustle of seedheads in November. These gardens feel authentic because they belong to their place.

Helping clients see the beauty in wildness

The hardest part of designing natural gardens isn’t the planting plan; it’s helping clients see differently. Many still associate neatness with value and fear what their neighbours will think. As designers, our role is to bridge that gap between intention and perception.

A few strategies can help:

Show, don’t tell: Use photographs, renderings and seasonal images to illustrate how a natural garden looks year-round, especially in late fall and winter.

Frame the wildness: Incorporate crisp edges, clean paths or sculptural elements to signal intention.

Balance the familiar with the new: Keep one or two traditional features such as a clipped hedge or a patio planter to ease the transition.

Redefine maintenance: Talk about “stewardship” rather than “weeding.” These gardens evolve; they don’t need constant correction, just gentle guidance.

Even small changes can shift perception. A pollinator border, a rain garden or a patch of meadow can demonstrate the value of this new approach and spark curiosity rather than resistance.

The designer’s role in a changing world

Landscape designers stand at the intersection of art and ecology. We have the privilege and the responsibility to shape how homeowners experience nature. When we design gardens that are both beautiful and beneficial, we move beyond decoration to restoration.

The natural garden is not a rejection of tradition but an evolution of it. It celebrates form, function and feeling all at once. It reminds us that beauty doesn’t have to be perfect, it just has to be alive.

In the years ahead, the most successful landscapes will be those that make room for life: where design and nature coexist gracefully. Because in the end, the measure of a garden is not how tidy it looks on opening day, but how vibrant it feels through the seasons that follow.



Click the video to learn more about the many career benefits of industry certification

Feature

Going bananas for artificial intelligence in landscape design

By Eli Paddle



AFTER

“Surf on top of the AI wave or get plowed under.” I find myself saying this with increasing frequency in response to questions from students and colleagues about the threat Artificial Intelligence (AI) may pose to the landscape design profession. Should we be afraid?

The most common questions I hear — both in the classroom and around the office — are: “What role does AI play in landscape design?” and “Will it replace me?” The answers to both are still evolving, but our profession has the power to help shape that future. As with previous technological shifts, our best strategy is to embrace AI as a tool.

When computer-aided drafting emerged in the 1980s, when Photoshop appeared in the 1990s and when SketchUp entered workflows in the 2000s, each innovation brought both disruption and opportunity. These tools changed certain tasks, especially those done by entry-level employees, and required all of us to learn and grow. AI is simply the next wave.

There’s a saying that “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks,” but most of us recognize that younger designers tend to adopt new technology more quickly. What I’m seeing in my classroom — full of young people — may



BEFORE

hint at where we’re headed with AI. Although my students feel some anxiety about AI, they also see its usefulness and that usefulness outweighs the fear. Many began experimenting with text-to-image tools to turn ideas into conceptual design imagery, but the results were often unpredictable and hard to control.

As with many new technologies, I was introduced to these tools through my students. Once I explored them myself, I quickly recognized the need for a better approach — one that preserved the way landscape designers ideate through sketches, photos and models. Students using ChatGPT or Midjourney were often frustrated by their limited control over outcomes. Because these tools rely heavily on written

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prompts, they didn't integrate well with our visual, image-based design process. Students ended up surrendering too much control of their ideas.

So how did we make AI work for us rather than against us? To give students more agency in the ideation process, I introduced a hybrid workflow that pairs their existing conceptual skills with more flexible AI tools. This led us to explore a relatively new option: Nano Banana, which — aside from having an unforgettable name — is one of the most promising AI tools for designers.

Nano Banana, available as a paid standalone app or free through Google's Gemini, lets users combine text prompts with multiple images — such as inspirational photos, sketches, precedent projects, plans and renderings. Unlike many other AI platforms, Nano Banana/Gemini responds well to prompt refinements, making it ideal for iterative design. This means students can meaningfully guide the spatial layout and composition of AI-generated imagery

rather than relying on unpredictable outputs.

The potential of Nano Banana is further underscored by its integration into Adobe Photoshop 2026, where generative AI can now be used within selections. This gives designers even more precision and ensures ethically sourced content through Adobe Stock when working inside the Adobe ecosystem.

While this is only one early example of how landscape designers might use AI — there will be many more points of application — it illustrates a crucial mindset: treat AI as a tool, not a threat. With thoughtful adoption, we can harness its power while still retaining authorship of our designs — and avoid becoming the second banana.

Eli Paddle is a professor in the Landscape Design Technology Diploma and the Bachelor of Environmental Design at Fanshawe College.



LDC

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Finding My Path

Becoming

By **Tony Lombardi, CLD**

My family hails from a small town in the south of Italy, where everything was connected to the land. Conservation and respect for nature were part of daily life. My grandfather showed me how to prune grape vines perfectly, and also how to graft a cherry branch onto an apple tree using a pocket knife, some string and wax. My mom taught me how to cut lawns: “Tony, the lines have to be straight, not wavy! Straight like an arrow!”

“Yes, mom.”

I don’t know if there was one specific moment in my life that led me to become a landscape designer, nor was it an epiphany moment. For me, becoming an accredited landscape designer was the result of a series of events that caused my work to evolve — from loving the outdoors as a child, to property maintenance, to garden installation and ultimately to landscape contracting. It became clear that becoming a certified designer was a good way to reassure clients that I had the experience and knowledge to do the work, and this set me apart from competitors.

I’ve always felt drawn outdoors, even when I should have been doing homework or chores inside. I’ve never been able to sit at a desk without wanting to go outside. If my parents were working in the garden, I would drop what I was doing and run outside to help. My parents, both professionals, were also landscape DIY enthusiasts. They rarely hired out work if they could do it themselves, and we often helped family and friends with their projects. My uncle owned a farm and I loved walking through his forest, admiring how nature repeated itself perfectly. He was a graphic artist and I would sit at his drafting table and sketch while at his house. Eventually, everything fell into place and I became a certified landscape designer.

Collaboration and passion

I enjoy working with landscape professionals who love their work as much as I do. When I collaborate with creative individuals willing to share their experience, the outcome is better work and shared learning. Specifically, I like working with tradespeople and craftspeople who share a common goal: to build something special. Passion fuels creativity. When you work with passionate people the results can be spectacular, with a bit of fun along the way. When passionate individuals collaborate, there might be a few sparks with some heat; however, when



you work with good people — those who love what they do — even amidst a few passionate challenges, the results are remarkable!

The craft

I have a deep appreciation for design and respect the craftspeople who build the garden. Being a designer is wonderful; however, building my own designs brings twice the joy, making every project more exciting. When I design, I imagine the process of constructing the space and how it fits together. With that understanding and personal involvement, I truly feel immersed in the garden environment. That’s what makes the design so special and meaningful.

There are places in the world where gardens represent culture, a way of life, and are much more than just artistry. When you design and immerse yourself in the build, you develop a stronger connection to the space and its outcome. Culturally, in Japan, gardens are created over a lifetime of nurturing and shaping and the person who creates the garden is called the “Shokunin,” a Japanese term meaning “craftsperson” or “artisan.” However, it goes far beyond being a skilled worker; it embodies a deep dedication to one’s craft, a strong work ethic and a lifelong pursuit of mastery. They are revered because they are the creators, the people who turn ideas into reality.

Together

My favourite projects are those where I can work with my friends and enjoy building gardens together. For me, it’s all about sharing our passion and love for what we do — plus having a shoulder to lean on or cry on. We’re in the trenches together.

Tony Lombardi, CLD, has owned and led Dr. Landscape Inc. in Toronto, Ont., for 34 years. His company specializes in boutique landscape design, installation, construction and garden management that aims to deliver high-quality landscape services grounded in honesty, professionalism and expertise.

Feature

No one designs a landscape alone:

Why mentorship is the secret ingredient to a thriving career

By Heather Jerrard



Brace yourself for a reality check: You did not get to where you are right now by yourself. I know. Woah! Take a second and let that sink in.

Think about it. Did you go to college or university? Or maybe you took a different path entirely. Either way, did you truly make that decision in a vacuum? Or were you encouraged, guided, nudged or lovingly (or not-so-lovingly) convinced one way or another?

Are you currently employed? How did you come across that job posting? Did it magically appear on your screen? Or did someone forward it to you, tag you in a post or casually mention, “Hey, you’d be great for this!”? And what even started your job search in the first place? A conversation? A bad day? A mentor asking, “Is this really where you want to be?”

And if you’re running your own business — let’s be honest — how the heck did *that* happen?

When we pause long enough to reflect, it becomes clear: we are all a culmination of past experiences, a blend of nature and nurture and — perhaps most importantly — the influence of people we’ve encountered along the way.

Here’s the part that really gets me. There are people out there who are exactly where they are today because of *you*. Mind blown, right?

At some point in our careers, many of us feel like we’re sitting on a bench, waiting. Waiting for someone to walk by with the next clue, the big idea, the breakthrough lesson that will launch us into the next chapter of our journey.

But here’s the twist: sometimes, someone joins *us* on that bench because we have something to gift them.

Finding my way into landscape design

When I began my own journey into landscape design back in 2013, I had no idea how many people would eventually join me on that bench: guides, mentors, teachers, friends. Sometimes I was the student, absorbing every bit of wisdom offered. Other times, I realized I had something valuable to share.

What I did know, deep in my bones, was that I never wanted to settle for work that felt meaningless. That value came from my mum, who showed me what it looked like to dedicate yourself to work that mattered.

From my dad, I inherited the courage to follow my heart and chase what genuinely brought me joy — even when it didn’t look like the safest or most obvious path.

My husband supported me wholeheartedly when I decided to go back to college, not because it was practical or expected, but because it was something I wanted to do.

My instructors pushed me to learn everything I possibly could. They challenged me, encouraged me and believed in me — so much so that one of them connected me with my first employer after graduation. A fellow member of the Women in Landscaping group convinced me to apply for a job that absolutely

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Members of Landscape Ontario's Peer to Peer Network connect each year at a two-day Fall Summit in Muskoka, Ont.

terrified me at the time. (You know the kind — the one where you read the posting and think, “Surely, they don’t mean *me*?”)

And then there was the universe. And COVID-19. Together, they gave me a not-so-gentle shove into starting my own company. I didn’t do it alone. I did it after countless conversations, reassurances and reality checks from members of Landscape Ontario’s Peer-to-Peer Network.

Every step forward came with someone walking beside me — or sitting next to me on that bench.

The cost of going it alone

If there is one thing I could share with designers at every stage of their career — whether you’re brand new or decades in — it’s this: You are greatly missing out if you are not plugged in.

Who could you be teaching right now? Who might be waiting for a bit of encouragement to take the next step, apply for that job, raise their hand or believe they belong in this industry?

And just as important — who could you be learning from? Who could challenge your thinking, refine your process or remind you why you fell in love with this profession in the first place?

Landscape design is creative, technical, emotional and demanding. It thrives on shared knowledge. Mentorship isn’t a “nice-to-have.” It’s a career accelerator — and a deeply human one at that.

Mentorship doesn’t have to be formal (but it can be)

When people hear the word *mentorship*, they often picture something formal and structured: an apprenticeship program, scheduled evaluations, defined goals and official titles.

And yes, those kinds of programs are incredibly valuable.

But mentorship can also be informal. It can look like regular coffee dates to review progress and challenges. A quick phone call to talk through a tricky client situation. A site walk where experience is shared in real time. A text message that says, “You’ve got this.”

No matter the format, successful mentorship relationships tend to share a few key ingredients:

Mentorship is a two-way street

The most important thing to understand is that mentorship is not a one-sided transaction. It’s a collaboration.

Both mentor and mentee must be committed to sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences and learning from one another. It requires consistency — regular meetings, clear expectations and an agreed-upon way to measure growth and progress. Great mentorship is also cross-generational. Sometimes you’re teaching. Other times, you’ll be surprised by how much you’re learning — whether it’s new technology, fresh perspectives or innovative approaches to old challenges.

Clear professional and personal boundaries matter, too. Mutual respect for time, effort and perspectives creates a relationship where both parties feel valued.

Show up — fully

Whether you’re mentoring or being mentored, showing up matters. Show up prepared. Show up curious. Show up ready to listen as much as you talk.

Mentorship only works when both parties commit to regular check-ins, open and honest communication and holding each other accountable. Growth doesn’t happen by accident — it happens through intention and consistency.

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Psychological safety is non-negotiable

For mentorship to truly work, psychological safety must be present. There needs to be a shared understanding that what is said in those conversations stays confidential. That questions are welcome. That uncertainty isn't a weakness. That admitting a mistake won't result in punishment, embarrassment or intimidation.

Bad habits, poor practices or missteps are far easier to correct early — when people feel safe enough to talk about them openly.

When someone is yelled at for making a mistake, chances are they'll make another one. The difference? Next time, they'll try to hide it.

Walk the talk

There are countless great lessons out there — many of which are much easier said than done.

A strong mentor doesn't just talk about best practices, they demonstrate them. They model

professionalism, integrity, curiosity and accountability through their actions.

Watching someone *live* the lessons they teach is often far more impactful than any instruction manual or checklist.

Mistakes are learning opportunities

Here's a universal truth: everyone makes mistakes. Everyone.

When a mistake happens, pause and reflect. What went wrong? Was it a lack of training or communication? Was someone rushing? Feeling pressure to perform? Missing critical information?

Mistakes are data. They tell us where systems can improve, where support is needed and where learning can happen.

Accountability is a skill that can be taught and learned. But fear is not a teaching tool. Growth happens when people feel supported enough to take responsibility, reflect and do better next time.

Who's sitting on your bench?

Mentorship is more than the exchange of knowledge or experience; it's a partnership, not a hierarchy. It thrives when both people are equally committed to growing together, investing in trust, shared learning and open, honest communication.

At different points in your career, you will be the student. At other times, the teacher. Often, you'll be both at once.

So take a look around. Who's influenced your journey? And just as importantly — who might be quietly waiting for you to sit down beside them?

None of us design landscapes — or careers — alone. And that, truly, is what makes this profession so rich.

Heather Jerrard is a landscape designer at My Landscape Artist and host of the Hops & Hedges Podcast.



We're looking for stories, ideas and voices from across Canada. If you have a story idea or want to contribute to a future edition, reach out to Lexi Dearborn at lexi@dearborndesigns.com

From hi-tech to high-impact design:

Jeff Rolland's design journey

By Lexi Dearborn, CLD

After 22 years in the hi-tech sector as a PCB and mechanical design draftsman/illustrator, Jeff Rolland knew it was time for a change. "I wanted to do something I was passionate about," he said. His love for working in the garden, combined with his design and artistic abilities, led him down a new path: landscape design.

Rolland's design philosophy is all about functional beauty. "I'm not going to design flamboyant, outlandish landscapes," he explained. "I focus on what works for my clients' lifestyles, what they'll enjoy every day." This simplicity, paired with careful observation, guides his process from start to finish.

During the initial consultation, Rolland walks the property with his clients, listening closely as they describe their hopes, dislikes and lifestyle. "I usually have the visual of the finished landscape in my head while on site," he said. From there, preliminary plans are refined through virtual meetings, incorporating client feedback before the final design is set.

"Probably my favourite design was for clients who wanted the exact opposite of their current gardens. The couple lived on a riverside property with many sprawling naturalized gardens that were becoming unruly and overgrown. They had just bought an old home in a very prestigious and historic part of the city, and it was undergoing major renovations to modernize the interior. She wanted new gardens for the outside.

"The large backyard offered plenty of space to include everything they imagined, but since they were also cottagers and away most weekends, they did not want high-maintenance features they wouldn't use, like a fire feature, pool, hot tub or sauna. They only wanted gardens in the backyard — nothing like their previous landscape — that included their favourite plants: roses, peonies and hydrangeas.

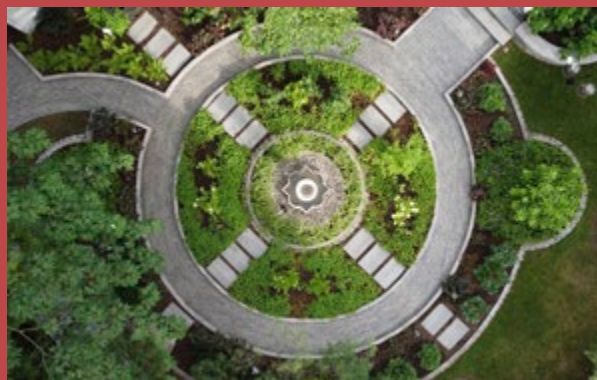
"Given the style of the home and neighbourhood, I immediately envisioned a more formal, old-world garden with a central water fountain. The clients liked the idea and allowed me to start my design work. As I was planning, my hands were busy trying to catch up with my mind; it was one of those designs that was 99 per cent in my head before I put pencil to paper. Some challenges arose, such

as a preference for certain plants and a dislike for perennial 'formal favourites,' such as boxwoods. This meant I had to consider alternatives, which influenced some planting schemes.

"In the end, the clients were very happy with the new gardens, and I was satisfied with both the process and the result. In 20 years of landscape design, I've never designed anything quite like it and it was truly inspiring during both the design process and during construction."

Though he's passionate about Canadian landscapes, Rolland admits he'd love to work elsewhere in Canada. "I'd love to work in Victoria or on Vancouver Island," he said, eager to explore a completely different climate and setting than Ontario.

For Rolland, landscape design isn't just a career — it's a way to blend creativity, practicality and a love of nature into spaces that delight and inspire. And after years of hi-tech work, he's finally found a profession that truly allows him to flourish.



Upcoming Events

IN-PERSON EVENT

Toronto: Designers Coffee Morning Thursday, August 27, 2026 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Multy Home, 7900 Keele St #100, Concord

Join us at the beautiful Multy Home Innovation Centre in Concord to check out their wide range of garden products and accessories. Frankie Flowers will also discuss leading brand strategy, business growth and how to strengthen customer engagement. Proceeds will support the CLD Student Bursary program.



FREE VIRTUAL EVENT

Mentor Moments: Enhancing Your Design Edge Thursday, September 24, 2026 at 12 p.m.

Lexi Dearborn, CLD, Dipl.B. ODHLD

Explore how to turn quieter design times to your greatest advantage. It's the perfect time to sharpen your skills, strengthen your process, build new connections, elevate customer service, and in turn, grow a more resilient business.



IN-PERSON EVENT

London: Designers Coffee Morning Thursday, October 29, 2026 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Innovation Village, 1001 Fanshawe College Blvd, London

Guest speakers Scott Wentworth, Blake Sicard and Lexi Dearborn will discuss topics of interest to landscape designers at the next installment of the Designers Morning hosted by the London Chapter of Landscape Ontario. [RSVP online](#) to attend this free event.



FREE VIRTUAL EVENT

Mentor Moments: Drainage and Grading Solutions Thursday, November 19, 2026 from Noon - 1 p.m.

David Wright, CLD, OALA, CSLA, LICM, GOM

Improve your understanding of drainage best practices and learn how proper grading can divert water from structures, when French drains are most effective for moisture control and how soak-away pits handle stormwater runoff. Common drainage problems and practical solutions will also be discussed.



IN-PERSON EVENT

Landscape Designers Conference 2027 Monday, January 11, 2027 from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Toronto, Ontario

This annual event for landscape designers, architects, contractors and horticultural professionals at all stages of their career provides a full day of practical insights, fresh ideas and inspiration to kick off the Congress week. Registration includes admission to the Congress Trade Show (Jan. 12-14) and more!

