

CALL FOR ENTRIES: 2026 AWARDS PROGRAM

General Information

You are invited to participate in the 2026 CLCA East Bay Chapter Beautification Awards Program. Entries and payment must be received by 5pm, April 24th, 2026. Mail a check with your entries to: CLCA East Bay Chapter, c/o Laura A Leuer, 3130 Balfour Rd. Suite D #215 Brentwood, CA 94513. No entries or payment will be accepted after 5pm, April 24th.

Judging will take place May 14th and 15th 2026. Projects are judged anonymously. Judges are selected from outside the CLCA East Bay Chapter. All qualified entries will be evaluated and scored according to the Judges Guidelines. The awards will be presented to the winners at the awards presentation on June 12th, 2026.

Entry Categories - Installation

1. Petite Residential Installation: Any single-family residence with landscaping costs not exceeding \$10,000.
2. Small Residential Installation: Any single-family residence with landscaping costs between \$10,001 and \$50,000.
3. Medium Residential Installation: Any single-family residence with landscaping costs between \$50,001 and \$120,000.
4. Large Residential Installation: Any single-family residence with landscaping costs between \$120,001 and \$250,000.
5. Custom Residential Installation: Any single-family residence with landscaping costs exceeding \$250,000.
6. Small Commercial Installation: Any multi-family, industrial or other commercial project with landscaping costs not exceeding \$120,000.
7. Medium Commercial Installation: Any multi-family, industrial or other commercial project with landscaping costs not exceeding \$120,001-\$250,000.
8. Large Commercial Installation: Any multi-family, industrial or other commercial project with landscaping costs exceeding \$250,001.
9. Public Works Installation: Any project financed by public funds.
10. Small Design/Build Installation: Any project with a total cost not exceeding \$150,000 designed and installed by contractor. A reduced copy of the plan (no larger than 11x17) is required, or entry will be disqualified. Judging will be based 50% on the quality of design, and 50% on quality of construction.
11. Medium Design/Build Installation: Any project with a total cost between \$150,001- \$300,000 designed and installed by contractor. A reduced copy of the plan (no larger than 11x17) or entry will be disqualified. Judging will be based 50% on the quality of design, and 50% on quality of construction.
12. Large Design/Build Installation: Any project with a total cost exceeding \$300,001 designed and installed by contractor. A reduced copy of the plan (no larger than 11x17) are required, or entry will be disqualified. Judging will be based 50% on the quality of design, and 50% on quality of construction.
13. Renovation Installation: Not less than 35% of existing site features must be retained or preserved and incorporated into the renovated project. The objective is to ensure that finished improvements are well integrated into the site, respectful of pre-existing conditions. All entries must be accompanied with a minimum of three digital "before" photos that represent preserved site features and printed on photo paper, labeled before.
14. Special Effects Installation: Any project using unique construction methods or materials for special artistic effects in (a) Outdoor lighting or (b) Water features. Outdoor lighting entries must be accompanied by a minimum of three photos demonstrating the special effects produced by the lighting during the nighttime.
15. Sustainable Landscape Installation: Any installation project designed, installed and maintained to conserve resources such as water and fuel (in terms of mowing, shearing blowing, etc.), and/or uses recycled or enduring materials. The project must rely on maintaining soil health as opposed to synthetic fertilizers, employ Integrated Pest Management to minimize toxic applications, minimize run off from site, and support desirable wildlife and biodiversity.
16. Water Conservation Installation: Any installation project designed, installed, and maintained to conserve water in terms of controllers, sprinklers, or any other innovative watering systems of other types. Must include a year's worth of water bills after the project was installed to demonstrate actual water savings.

Entry Categories - Maintenance

17. Small Residential Maintenance: Complete landscape maintenance on residential property with monthly contract amount not exceeding \$700.
18. Medium Residential Maintenance: Complete landscape maintenance on residential property with monthly contract amount of \$701 to \$1000.
19. Large Residential Maintenance: Complete landscape maintenance on any residential property with monthly contract amount exceeding \$1000.
20. Small Commercial Maintenance: Maintenance of multi-family, industrial or any other type of commercial project with monthly contract amount not exceeding \$2500.
21. Medium Commercial Maintenance: Maintenance of multi-family, industrial or any other type of commercial project with monthly contract amount between \$2501-\$7500.
22. Large Commercial Maintenance: Maintenance of multi-family, industrial or any other type of commercial project with monthly contract amount exceeding \$7501.
23. Public Park / Athletic Field Maintenance: Maintenance of recreational park or sports field. No contract amount required.

SPECIAL AWARD CATEGORIES

In addition to the regular entry categories, additional projects may be awarded at the judges' discretion for the following special award categories:

- The Excelsior Award honors a project performed by a company who has been a member less than two years and demonstrates excelsior (striving higher) qualities.
- The Sweepstakes Award honors those projects deemed most outstanding in their respective categories. Two such awards will be presented: One in the installation categories and another in the maintenance categories.
- The Judges Award representing the highest award given will be presented to the project deemed by the judges to be the finest of all the projects entered in the program regardless of category, size, or monetary value.

Please note there is a possibility that a category may have no awards presented, even though entries were submitted.

AWARDS JUDGING GUIDELINES

Installation Categories

Judging for installation categories shall be based on:

1. Grading/Drainage: Good gradient transitions, proper use and setting of drain inlets, no soggy low areas.
2. Soil preparation: Incorporation of amendment by area and/or pit planting.
3. Plant material: Healthy appearance, root ball planted at the proper height, new trees properly staked and tied.
4. Lawn: Smooth and even grades with good physical appearance, consistent texture and good green color.
5. Edging: Good tight installation properly set and staked.
6. Irrigation: Zoned systems with consistent head type, spacing and coverage. Proper installation of valves, backflow prevention device, and wiring.
7. Masonry: Dry stacked or mortared walls and patios consistently laid, evenly aligned, structurally sound.
8. Concrete flatwork: Consistently finished surfaces, no standing water, joints even and regular.
9. Woodwork: Consistently matched materials, regular screw and/or nail spacing, sound footings, structurally sound, good carpentry joinery and detailing.
10. Water features: Good circulation and aeration. High quality finish and no apparent leaks. The pump must be running!
11. Outdoor Lighting: Correctly installed fixtures, transformers and other parts of system with no exposed wires. Placement of fixtures and type should be consistent with garden design.

AWARDS JUDGING GUIDELINES

Maintenance Categories

Judging for maintenance categories shall be based on:

1. General appearance: Overall appearance excellent, hardscape clean, beds free of weeds, excellent curb appeal.
2. Plant material: Good healthy appearance structurally pruned and properly staked. No mower or string trimmer damage to trees.
3. Lawns: Green and lush in appearance, weed-free, mowed and edged neatly.
4. Seasonal color: Well-planted accent color, neat and weed-free. Good quality for time of year. Perennials properly trimmed and healthy.
5. Irrigation: Even distribution of irrigation heads in appropriate areas and quantities to service all types of plant materials. Irrigation components set properly to correct grade.
6. Weed and pest management: Excellent control of weeds and pests including insects, diseases (fungi, bacteria, viruses), snails and slugs throughout landscape.
7. Fertility: Healthy plants, no evidence of chlorosis or fertilizer burn on plant material.

ENTRY RULES

1. Only dues-paid regular members in good standing of the California Landscape Contractors Association East Bay Chapter are eligible.
2. No Company names can be printed on anything that the judges will see. Entry forms will be coded to conceal the entrant's identity from the judges.
3. Entry deadline is 5pm, Friday, April 24th, 2026. No entries will be accepted after 5pm, April 24th.
4. A separate and complete entry form must be submitted for each project in each category.
5. Include at least three horizontal digital image files (JPEG format) representing the project on a USB flash drive. Include PLAQUE on one image title. Submit all images for all entries on the same storage device in individual folders with the project name.
6. A member's residence may not be entered.
7. Entries must be located in Alameda, Contra Costa, or Solano Counties.
8. A project entered in this competition in a previous year may be entered again if it did not win an award.
9. Projects that previously won an award in an installation category may be resubmitted only in a maintenance category.
10. The entrant must have completed the major portion of each project submitted, and all work that your company performed (or subcontracted) must be checked off on the Judges Score Sheet (page 6).
11. Category cost limitations must be adhered to and a copy of the contract and any change orders showing the project contract price may be required.
12. Installation projects must have been installed after May 1, 2025.
13. The applicant must have continuously maintained maintenance projects since May 1, 2025.
14. Project owner's must allow judges to enter the property or the project will be disqualified and the entry fees forfeited.
15. Applicants must obtain Owner's Consent (page 6) and are encouraged to remind project owners that they will have judges entering their properties on one of the judging dates (May 14th and 15th, 2026). Project owner's presence is not required.
16. All work must be completed prior to the day of judging. Company trucks, signs or applicant's crew members seen by the judges will result in disqualification and forfeiture of entry fees.
17. Violation of any of the above rules may result in disqualification and forfeiture of entry fees.

ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

- Please type or print in ink all information requested. If multiple jobs are being entered, please complete this page once and complete pages 5 and 6 of the application for each individual entry.
- All projects entered must include a USB drive with at least 3 horizontal images and no more than 5 images saved with the project name. Submit all images for all entries on the same storage device in individual folders with the project name. Include 1 image title with the word PLAQUE to be used if your project receives an award.
- Fee is \$100.00 for each entry. Entrants must purchase a minimum of two banquet dinners in addition to the entry fee. The cost of two banquet dinners is \$250.00
- If the chapter receives too few entries, the 2026 program will be cancelled and entry fees refunded.

COMPANY INFO

Contractor/Firm Name: _____

Contact: _____

Contractor/Firm Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Business Phone (include area code): _____

Cell Phone (include area code): _____

Email: _____

Owner's Consent

I/We hereby grant permission to enter our property or premises for the purpose of judging, photographing and publicizing the landscape project in this competition to the accredited representatives of the California Landscape Contractors Association on May 14th and 15th, 2026. It is understood that no fees or charges of any kind are required of the owner to enter the contest. Entries with locked gates or unattended dogs will not be judged.

I give CLCA Award Judges permission to judge the landscape if I am not present.

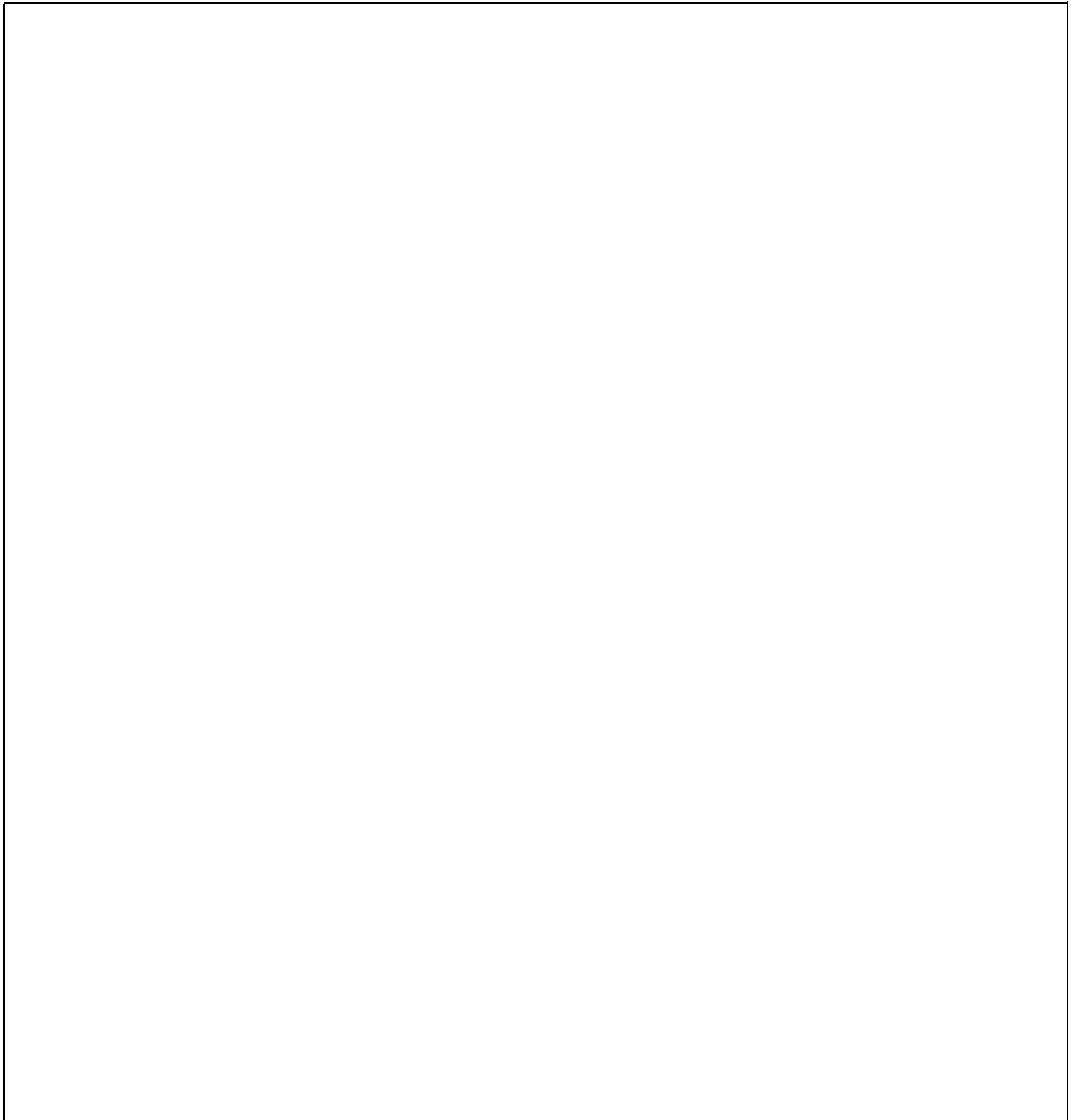
Project Owner's Name: _____ Phone: _____

(Type or Print)

Project Owner's Signature: _____ Date: _____

PROPERTY SKETCH MAP

Please provide a sketch of the property and include entry, property lines, structures and shaded area where landscape is to be judged.



For official use only - do not type or write in this box.

Entry No _____

JUDGES SCORE SHEET

Project Name: _____

Category: _____

- Please check under Installation or Maintenance the work performed in your contract by your company and subcontractors.
- **All items** of entire contract must be listed. Proof of Contract may be required.
- Please note that the minimum score required to win an award is 7.5.
- **DO NOT COMPLETE THE "SCORE" COLUMN OR "JUDGE'S COMMENTS" AREA**
- Judges Score Sheets will be retained until August 31st, 2026. After August 31st, 2026 the score sheets and all entry documentation will no longer be available.

INSTALLATION

Check work completed by your company or your subcontractors

SCORE

- 1. Grading/drainage _____
- 2. Soil preparation _____
- 3. Planting _____
- 4. Lawn _____
- 5. Edging _____
- 6. Irrigation:
 - Overhead Spray _____
 - Drip _____
- 7. Masonry:
 - Concrete _____
 - Brick _____
 - Stone _____
- 8. Woodwork:
 - Deck _____
 - Fence _____
 - Arbor _____
- 9. Water Feature _____
- 10. Outdoor Lighting _____
- 11. Other _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

MAINTENANCE

Check work completed by your company or your subcontractors

SCORE

- 1. General appearance _____
- 2. Planting _____
- 3. Lawn _____
- 4. Seasonal color _____
- 5. Weeds _____
- 6. Pest Management _____
- 7. Fertility _____
- 8. Other _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

JUDGES COMMENTS:

Judges Only:

The site Difficulty/Professional Skill factor shall apply to all categories.
 Site Difficulty/Professional Skill 1.00 to 1.20 _____