

## **Transcript of Sue Sirrs, Landscape Architect**

The coolest thing about my job is... I get to design spaces and bring them to life!

Many people identify that an architect designs a building. But all those spaces between our buildings—it's really that landscape piece that's the glue that holds all those building together. I think of landscape architecture as an umbrella that allows me to do many different things within that. I could spend my whole career designing therapeutic gardens, or I could spend my career designing parking lots, or I could spend my time and energy doing the living wall work that I love so much. I'm currently working on a playground project; it's on the Halifax waterfront and it's been a two-year process where I've worked with a team of incredibly talented people. We did this really fun workshop with kids to get their ideas and their design input in the new playground because we're replacing a playground that was an absolutely beloved playground; kids loved it. We brought in an artist to work with us so we could get some quick sketches. It was really fun because the kids said, you know, the kids said they wanted an octopus or a sea creature or some kind of play structure; that it was really important to them that they could climb into it, and on it, and through it.

Some landscape architects come from a background where they really are very artistic, and there's really a blend of art and science in the practice.

If I was looking to go into landscape architecture now, there's a couple things that I'd really pay attention to. One is to make sure that I kept up with my maths and sciences so that I could keep that part of my practice viable. I would want to make sure I had a creative portfolio, and that can be quite a wide range of things, but make sure that there is a creative outlet in there that you can demonstrate. And another aspect that I think is really important is travel; that you get an opportunity to look at how people engage in their environment in other places.

If I was advising somebody now, I would say, "follow your heart." And if there's something out there that you love, you need to go for it.