LANDSCAPE
DEVELOPMENT

THE SIX NON-NEGOTIABLES

CONSTRUCTION • MAINTENANCE • ARCHITECTURE • ARBOR CARE

“We Make Our Clients’ Lives Easier and Give Them Peace of Mind”

THE SIX NON-NEGOTIABLES

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FOUNDER'S INTRODUCTION

"We Make Our Clients' Lives Easier and Give Them Peace of Mind"

This idea has guided Landscape Development for decades. It's not a slogan. It's what we sell. It's how we compete. And when we do it right, it's why clients stay with us for years.

We've been in business nearly 50 years. That didn't happen by accident. We've worked through recessions, labor shortages, droughts, fires, and everything else California can throw at us. A lot of companies didn't make it through those cycles. We did—for one reason: we make our clients' lives easier and give them peace of mind.

Landscaping is stressful. Clients are spending real money, working against tight timelines, and trusting us with their property—and often their reputation. There's noise, pressure, and a lot that can go wrong. Our job is simple to say and hard to do: remove friction, do what we said we'd do, do it right, and make the process feel easier, not harder.

When we get that right, something important happens. Clients breathe easier. They trust us. And they come back time and again.

This doesn't happen by accident. It happens in the small things—how we listen, how we communicate, how we deliver quality, how we stay safe, how we handle problems, and how we treat each other along the way.

One important point: our clients are both external and internal. Yes, we serve our customers. But we also serve each other. When we make our teammates' jobs easier, work flows better, mistakes get caught earlier, and stress drops. That's how performance improves, and that's how we create peace of mind across the whole company.

That's our advantage.

At Landscape Development, we call these behaviors that build peace of mind our Non-Negotiables. They're simple, and they're not optional.

Each one builds on the other:
- We listen first
- We communicate clearly and quickly
- We operate safely, always and everywhere
- We deliver quality and exceed expectations
- We stay transparent in our interactions
- We recognize our work is hard, so we strive to also make it fun

That's how we earn trust. That's how we build long-term relationships. That's how this company has lasted.

Read these carefully. Think about where you're strong—and where you can be better. Then put them to work.

This is how we succeed and how you build your career here.

— Gary Horton
Chairman and Founder

Listen first. Act second.

Understand the person before you try to solve the problem.

CHAPTER ONE

1. **Listen First**
2. Timely Communication
3. Operate with Absolute Safety
4. Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations
5. Practice Transparency Always
6. Make It Fun

The first mistake most people make in business is speaking too soon. At LDI, the first non-negotiable is simple: listen first.

You've heard "measure twice, cut once." Listening is the measuring. Too many people skip it—and pay for it later. Before you talk about the job, the price, or the schedule, understand the person. What matters to them? What are they worried about? How do they like to communicate?

Every client is different. When we adapt to how they work, everything gets easier—and outcomes improve. Listening is also how we begin delivering what we sell: peace of mind.

A Real Example — Listening Won the Job
We were bidding a large healthcare project with five contractors involved. The client didn't spend much time talking about price. He talked about frustration. On a previous job, his contractor had sent junior estimators who couldn't answer questions, submitted proposals in the wrong format, missed planting details, and failed to coordinate irrigation with electrical work.

Then he made two things clear. He wanted the proposal broken down to match his internal cost codes—exactly. And he preferred to review proposals in person, not by email.

Our business developer didn't just nod. He wrote everything down, asked clarifying questions, and repeated back what he heard. When the proposal was ready, he didn't send it. He scheduled a meeting and walked the client through it line by line. The cost codes matched. Irrigation coordination was detailed. Plant substitutions were already handled. A schedule was included, even though it wasn't required.

At the end of the meeting, the client said, "You're the only one who actually listened." We weren't the lowest price, but we got the job—and three more after that.

Listening When It's Uncomfortable
Listening often matters most when the news isn't good.

On one project, a client called upset because several trees were slightly out of alignment. The PM's first instinct was to explain. The layout was within tolerance, but the grading had shifted, and the crew had followed the staking. All of that was true, but the client wasn't satisfied.

Instead of defending the work, he asked the client to walk the site together. As they walked, the client explained something we didn't know. Those trees framed a key entry view, and he had pushed for our company internally. This project mattered to him personally.

Listen first. Act second.

Understand the person before you try to solve the problem.

What looked like a technical issue was really a trust in our company issue.

The PM listened, took notes, and asked questions. Two trees were reset and the alignment was corrected. The cost was minimal, but the impact wasn't. Later the client said, "I appreciate that you didn't argue. You listened." The project finished well, and the relationship got stronger.

Listening Builds the Relationship
Listening isn't only about projects. It's about people.

One account manager noticed photos in a client's office—a little league baseball player and a restored vintage Mustang. Instead of jumping straight into business, he asked about the pictures. The ball player turned out to be his son and restoring classic cars was his hobby. The tone of the meeting changed immediately. Over time, he followed up with simple, genuine questions about the client's personal interests.

When contract renewal came, the client said something simple and telling:

"All else being equal, I prefer working with people I enjoy. You actually take real interest."

The work was solid. Pricing was fair. Communication was professional. The difference was personal attention. People do business with people they like and trust.

Listening Inside LDI
This applies inside the company as well.

Crew leaders who listen to their teams avoid mistakes in the field. Project managers who listen to accounting prevent billing issues. Leaders who listen to field staff understand what is really happening on job sites.

The people closest to the work usually see problems first. When we listen, we solve those problems early. When we don't, they get expensive.

Summary
Listening isn't passive. It takes discipline, attention, and humility. It means slowing down when your instinct is to respond quickly and hearing not just the words, but what's behind them.

When we listen well, problems get solved faster, mistakes get caught earlier, trust gets stronger, and we win more work. When we don't, details are missed, rework increases, and relationships suffer.

Everything else—communication, safety, quality, transparency—begins here, with careful listening. Listen first. Act second.

Field Rule
Understand the person before you try to solve the problem.

Timely Communication

If the client should know something, tell them before they have to ask.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Listen First
2. **Timely Communication**
3. Operate with Absolute Safety
4. Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations
5. Practice Transparency Always
6. Make It Fun

Listening builds the foundation of understanding. Timely communication creates confidence.

In time sensitive businesses, silence creates anxiety. When clients don't hear from us they often assume something may be wrong. Lack of communication leaves room for assumptions, and assumptions rarely help a relationship. Timely communication means providing the right information at the right time, through the right channel, with enough clarity that it actually helps. Done well, it reassures the client that the project is under control. In other words, it creates what we ultimately sell: peace of mind.

Proactive, Not Reactive
Communication must be proactive. Clients should never have to chase us for information that affects their project. In this business, delays and changes are normal—weather shifts, materials arrive late, field conditions change. None of that is unusual. What matters is how quickly and clearly we communicate it. If you're wondering whether the client should know something, they probably should. Saying it early reduces stress and confusion. Waiting too long creates both.

Communication Has Deadlines Too
Communication isn't separate from the work. It is the work. If you tell a client you'll follow up tomorrow, follow up tomorrow. If a bid is due Friday at 2:00 p.m., deliver it before 2:00 p.m. If you promise a schedule update by the end of the day, it goes out that day. Small delays send a bigger message than we think. They suggest disorganization, even when the work itself is solid. Clients notice that. It's also worth remembering that sending a message doesn't mean it was received—emails get buried, texts get missed. When something matters, confirm it landed. A quick phone call can prevent hours of confusion.

Choose the Right Tool
Timely communication also means using the right method. A quick update might work by text, while a change order or schedule revision should be in writing. A formal agreement may require a letter, and a handwritten note can still go a long way. But when something is complicated, urgent, or emotional, one approach works better than the rest: **pick up the phone**. A five-minute conversation often solves what turns into twenty emails. It allows immediate clarification and avoids misunderstandings. Less experienced professionals sometimes default to email or text because it feels efficient, but avoiding direct conversation often slows things down. In landscaping, real conversations solve real problems. A simple sequence works well: call first, resolve the issue, then follow up with a short email documenting the outcome. That gives you speed, clarity, and accountability.

Make It Two-Way
Communication isn't just sending information. It's making sure it was understood. You can send a schedule, but does it align with expectations? You can email a change order, but does it answer the

Timely Communication

If the client should know something, tell them before they have to ask.

real concern? The only way to know is to ask. Simple questions like, “Does this align with what you’re expecting?” or “Anything you’d like handled differently?” bring issues to the surface early, before they become problems. Two-way communication keeps projects aligned and prevents surprises, and surprises are rarely good in this business.

Be Clear and Complete
Timely communication still has to be clear. Long emails get skimmed over, vague messages create risk, and incomplete updates lead to repeat conversations later. Clients are busy. They shouldn’t have to work to understand what you’re saying. Taking the time to make something clear and concise is part of the job. And when something matters, document it. From bids to schedules to change orders, written communication protects the client, the company, and the relationship.

A Practical Example
On one project, a PM learned that plant material would be delayed three days due to a supplier issue. It wasn’t a crisis, and it might not have impacted the schedule—but it could if conditions changed. He had a choice: wait and hope it gets resolved, or communicate early. He called the client, explained the situation, outlined the backup plan, and described how crews would be redirected to keep progress moving. Then he followed up with a short email. The client replied within minutes: “Thanks for the heads up. I appreciate not being surprised.” Nothing dramatic happened, but trust grew. That’s how timely communication usually works—it prevents small issues from becoming bigger ones.

The Standard
A simple question helps guide good judgment: Am I making the client’s life easier, and am I creating peace of mind? If the answer is yes, communication is probably at the right level. If not, it’s time to adjust. Clear, timely communication reduces friction, avoids rework, and shows competence. And competence builds trust.

In practice, this means returning calls and emails promptly, confirming that important information has been received, and not relying on a single message when something matters. It means stepping out of long email chains and picking up the phone when issues become complex or sensitive. It also means communicating across departments early, so estimating, project management, and accounting are working from the same information rather than discovering gaps later.

Summary
When communication is clear and prompt, clients stay informed, projects stay aligned, and problems get handled early. Trust builds because people feel included. When communication is delayed or unclear, anxiety rises, assumptions take over, and small issues turn into bigger ones. That’s why timely communication isn’t optional.

Field Rule
If the client should know something, tell them before they have to ask. And when it matters, **pick up the phone.**

Absolute Safety

If it isn’t safe, we stop

CHAPTER THREE

1. Listen First
2. Timely Communication
3. **Operate with Absolute Safety**
4. Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations
5. Practice Transparency Always
6. Make It Fun

With more than 1,400 employees, over 650 vehicles and thousands of pieces of equipment operating every day, the potential for accidents or harm is real. These risks aren't theoretical—they exist on every job, every day, and they must be respected.

In the wrong moment, a truck becomes a weapon. A power tool becomes a source of injury. A routine task becomes dangerous because something changed—traffic, weather, terrain, or distraction. We work in environments where risk is always present, and our response must be constant awareness, discipline, and precaution. Safety is not a program at LDI. It is a commitment we make to one another.

Everyone Goes Home As They Arrived
Let one principle guide every decision we make: everyone goes home the same way they arrived.

No schedule outranks safety. No deadline justifies shortcuts. No client request overrides safe practice, and no revenue target is worth a human injury. If a job must pause, it pauses. If equipment is questionable, it comes out of service. If conditions change, we reassess before continuing.

This is professionalism. A safe job is a professional job, and an unsafe job is a broken promise—to our people, our clients, and the public.

Prevention Beats Reaction
Safety starts before anything else. It begins with awareness—seeing risk before it becomes injury—because once something happens, it's already too late. The right mindset is simple: what could go wrong here, what are we missing, and what has changed?

We support that mindset with structure—daily safety reviews, stretch routines, planning before work begins, weekly safety lessons, proper PPE, and ongoing equipment inspections.

These systems matter, but systems alone don't prevent accidents. People do.

High Exposure Work Requires Discipline
We operate trucks, equipment, and tools in dynamic environments—around traffic, near the public, and under constantly changing conditions. The danger is rarely dramatic at the start. It shows up in ordinary moments—a strap not secured, a worker stepping into traffic, a tool used the wrong way, or protective gear removed because no one is watching.

Accidents usually begin with small decisions made carelessly. Good people make dangerous choices when they rush, react emotionally, or assume everything will be fine. Absolute safety means we don't allow convenience or emotion to override disciplined judgment.

Absolute Safety

If it isn’t safe, we stop

Driving Is High Risk
Driving is one of the highest-risk activities in our company. With hundreds of vehicles on the road every day, what we do behind the wheel affects not only us, but everyone around us.

Every LDI vehicle represents the company, and safe driving requires patience, focus, and awareness. We assume other drivers may be distracted or unpredictable, and we drive accordingly.

LDI, we follow a simple rule: the truck doesn't move until the seatbelts click. When my kids were growing up, our family rule was the same—the car didn't leave the driveway until I heard five clicks, one for each person in the car. That principle carries over here. Everyone buckles up, every time.

Safe driving means maintaining distance, adjusting for conditions, avoiding aggressive behavior, never using a phone while driving, backing carefully, and securing equipment. A moment of distraction can change lives forever—ours and someone else's.

Alcohol and drugs have no place on our jobsites or in our vehicles. This is zero tolerance. If you're impaired, you don't work. And if you see someone who shouldn't be driving or operating equipment, you speak up. That's part of taking care of each other.

We also use tools like Samsara to reinforce safe habits and provide accountability across our fleet. These systems don't replace judgment—they support it and help protect both our employees and the public.

Everyone Is a Safety Leader
Safety isn't a department. It belongs to all of us.

When you slow down, you protect someone. When you speak up, you protect someone. When you act instead of ignoring something unsafe, you protect someone. Most accidents that never happen are prevented by someone paying attention.

Safety isn't a box to check. It's a mindset carried every day, on every site. And leaders lead safely.

What Safe Behavior Looks Like
"Safety first" only matters if we define it in real terms. It shows up in daily decisions—securing equipment, using spotters, wearing seatbelts, avoiding distractions, wearing PPE, keeping guards in place, using tools correctly, pausing when conditions change, communicating clearly, and de-escalating conflict. These aren't suggestions. They are professional standards. Safe behavior means thinking ahead instead of reacting, choosing caution over convenience, and protecting yourself, your teammates, our clients' people, and the public.

Summary
Absolute safety means safety comes first—every time. We don't trade caution for speed or convenience. A safe job is a professional job. An unsafe job is a broken promise.
And we keep our promises.

Field Rule
If it isn't safe, we stop.

Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations

Meet the plans and specifications - and then some.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Listen First
2. Timely Communication
3. Operate with Absolute Safety
4. **Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations**
5. Practice Transparency Always
6. Make It Fun

Quality workmanship is foundational to our success. It is not optional. But at LDI, quality means more than simply meeting the minimum requirements of the contract.

In landscaping, there is nowhere to hide. Our work is visible, measurable, inspectable, and contractual. Every project begins with plans, specifications, scope, and commitments, and quality starts by honoring those commitments exactly—following the plans, meeting the specifications, and respecting the scope and intent. Not approximately. Not "close enough." Exactly. That is the baseline.

Delivering exactly what was contracted fulfills the agreement. It gets us paid and keeps us out of trouble, but it doesn't set us apart. Meeting expectations earns satisfaction. Exceeding expectations earns loyalty. At LDI, we believe in a simple standard: do the work exactly as promised—plus one step further. Per plans and specifications—and then some.

That "plus one" is where we separate ourselves. It doesn't require grand gestures. It shows up in the details—leaving the jobsite cleaner than required, completing punch list items before they are requested, catching issues the client hasn't seen, organizing documentation so it's easier to use, or suggesting improvements that save time or cost. The effort is small, but the impact can be immense. When we consistently go one step beyond, clients notice, trust deepens, and that trust is what brings them back.

Quality Is Defined by the Client
One important truth is that quality is ultimately defined by the client. What we believe is high quality may not align with what the client values most. Some care deeply about aesthetics, others prioritize durability, speed, or documentation. Listening allows us to understand those priorities and deliver work that is not only technically correct, but aligned with what matters most to them.

This brings us back to the first Non-Negotiable. What does this client care about? Where have they been burned before? What are they watching most closely? When we listen and understand those answers, we can deliver quality in a way that actually matters.

Quality in Internal Work
Quality doesn't stop in the field. It applies to everything we do—estimating, project management, accounting, scheduling, documentation, and invoicing. When we hand off work internally, the next person is our client. Incomplete information, messy files, or vague instructions create friction, and that friction eventually shows up externally as delays, mistakes, or confusion. Professional pride means handing off work that is clear, complete, and organized. In a complex company, internal quality drives the external quality the client sees.

Schedule Is Part of Quality
Timeliness is inseparable from quality. A perfect installation delivered late is still a failure in the client's

Deliver Quality and Keep Commitments

Meet the plans and specifications - then exceed expectations.

eyes, and in many cases schedule reliability matters as much as the finished product. If something must change, it is communicated early and clearly, but the expectation remains the same—we do what we said we would do. Trade schedules are interconnected. When one contractor slips, others are affected. Clients depend on partners who are reliable, and being best-in-class means delivering both quality workmanship and scheduling discipline.

Personal Pride
Every project carries our name—and yours. When someone walks a site, they are evaluating the work and the people behind it. Quality reflects personal pride.

Ask yourself whether you would sign your name to it, whether you would show it to your family, and whether you would be proud to point to it years from now. Excellence isn't accidental. It is chosen, detail by detail.

Own the Outcome
Quality includes accountability. If something is not right, we address it. If something needs to be corrected, we correct it. If something can be improved, we improve it. Silence erodes confidence, while proactive action builds it. High-quality work, combined with clear communication, creates trust that lasts beyond a single project.

Summary
Delivering quality fulfills the contract. Exceeding expectations builds the relationship. That is how we turn satisfied clients into loyal ones, earn repeat work, and build a reputation that carries from one project to the next, year after year.

Field Rule
Meet the plans and specifications—then go one step further.

Practice Transparency Always

No surprises. If something is wrong, speak up immediately.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Listen First
2. Timely Communication
3. Operate with Absolute Safety
4. Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations
5. **Practice Transparency Always**
6. Make It Fun

Transparency begins with a simple principle: we deal in truth. Not partial truth, not delayed truth—just truth. At Landscape Development, we expect people to face reality as it is, even when it's uncomfortable. That means being honest with ourselves, with our coworkers, and with our clients. When problems surface, we acknowledge them and deal with them directly.

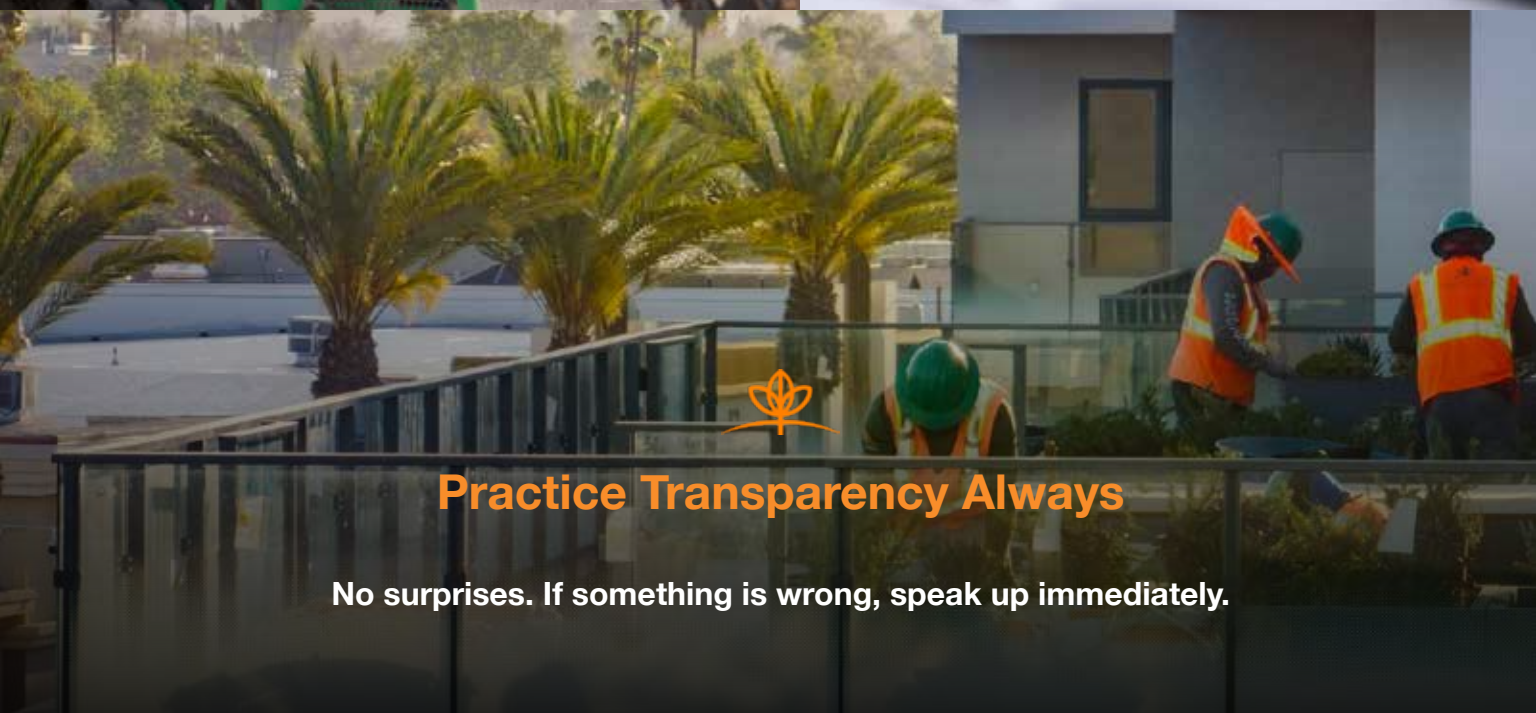
Transparency also means something equally important: no surprises. Our clients and our teammates should never be caught off guard by something we already knew. When information is shared early, problems can be solved while options still exist. When information is delayed or withheld, small issues have a way of becoming larger ones. In this business, bad news travels fast, so we stay ahead of it. If something goes wrong, we surface it immediately and deal with it directly. Acting early preserves options. Waiting removes them and damages trust.

Clear and Open Proposals
Transparency begins before a project ever starts. Our proposals must be clear, fair, and easy to understand so that a client never has to guess what is included or excluded. If something is complicated, we simplify it. If scope is unclear, we clarify it. If assumptions exist, we state them openly. Taking the time to make things clear on the front end prevents conflict later and shows respect for the client's time and intelligence. Clarity is a form of professionalism, and professionalism builds trust.

Honesty Inside the Company
Transparency also starts internally. If something is wrong, we say it. If we make a mistake, we admit it. If we miss something, we surface it. Hiding errors only postpones the problem, and when it finally surfaces, the impact is usually greater than it needed to be. Transparency across departments matters just as much. Estimating, project management, accounting, and field operations all depend on one another. When information is shared openly, decisions improve and problems are solved earlier. Strong organizations operate with shared visibility because everyone is working from the same reality.

Speak Up Early
On one project, an estimator realized after submitting a bid that a significant item had been missed during takeoff. It was a real exposure—large enough to affect profitability. She had a choice: stay silent and hope it could be absorbed or speak up immediately. She chose to speak up. Because the issue surfaced early, the team was able to evaluate alternatives, identify a substitution, and reduce the impact. The mistake mattered, but the timing of the truth mattered more. Transparency created options. Silence would have taken them away.

Step Toward the Client, Not Away
Transparency matters most when something goes wrong. In those moments, human instinct often leads people to hesitate, delay, or hope the issue goes unnoticed. At Landscape Development, we do the opposite—we step toward the client, not away.



Practice Transparency Always

No surprises. If something is wrong, speak up immediately.

On one project, a dog park was installed with the wrong type of sod. It looked fine at first, but it didn't meet specification and wouldn't perform well under heat and heavy use. The client hadn't noticed, but our manager had. Instead of waiting, he contacted the client, explained the situation clearly, and told them we would replace it before it became a problem. The sod was replaced with no disruption. The client wasn't upset; they were impressed—not by the mistake, but by the integrity. Transparency didn't weaken the relationship. It strengthened it.

Proactive Truth
Transparency also means helping clients see what they may not yet see. If we identify a design issue, we raise it. If we see a future maintenance concern, we bring it forward. If we find a better approach that saves time or cost, we share it. We don't wait to be asked. We act as partners, and partnerships create stronger, longer-lasting relationships than transactions ever will.

The Cost of Hiding the Truth
There is a simple reality in business: trust, once broken, is difficult to restore. Short-term advantage gained by hiding the truth almost always leads to long-term damage. At Landscape Development, honesty isn't a tactic—it's a foundation. Transparency is key to delivering the peace of mind our clients expect from us.

Summary
Transparency means telling the truth, surfacing problems early, correcting mistakes quickly, and communicating clearly. It allows us to solve problems while they are still manageable and keeps everyone aligned around reality. Clients trust people who deal in truth, even when it is difficult, and that trust is built over time through consistent behavior. Our commitment to transparency is one of the reasons this company has endured: Honesty builds trust. Trust creates peace of mind. And peace of mind is what our clients desire.

This is reflected in our daily actions. Raising issues as soon as they are identified—whether in an estimate, a budget, a schedule, or a client conversation—rather than waiting to see how they play out. It means being clear about scope, assumptions, and gaps up front, and making sure that estimating, project management, and accounting are all working from the same information. It also means stepping toward difficult conversations with clients early, so problems are addressed while solutions still exist, not after options have narrowed.

Field Rule
No surprises. If something is wrong, speak up immediately.

Make it Fun

Work hard. Take care of each other. Build peace of mind. Make it Fun.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Listen First
2. Timely Communication
3. Operate with Absolute Safety
4. Deliver Quality and Exceed Expectations
5. Practice Transparency Always
6. **Make It Fun**

When we began building Landscape Development, I realized something simple. If we were successful, most of our adult lives would be spent working alongside the people around us. The days would be long, the work demanding, and the responsibility constant. If that was going to be the case, then the environment we created had to be one where people worked well together and genuinely enjoyed each other's company.

The work itself will always be demanding. That part doesn't change. But the environment around the work is a choice. That's why "Make It Fun" sits alongside the other five Non-Negotiables. It isn't a distraction from performance—it's one of the things that sustains it over time.

The Reality of the Work
The work we do, and the work our clients do, is not easy. Landscaping is physical, deadlines can be tight, and conditions rarely cooperate. Weather shifts, equipment breaks, plans change, and problems tend to appear at the least convenient time. Our clients face the same pressures—budgets, schedules, and expectations that don't slow down.

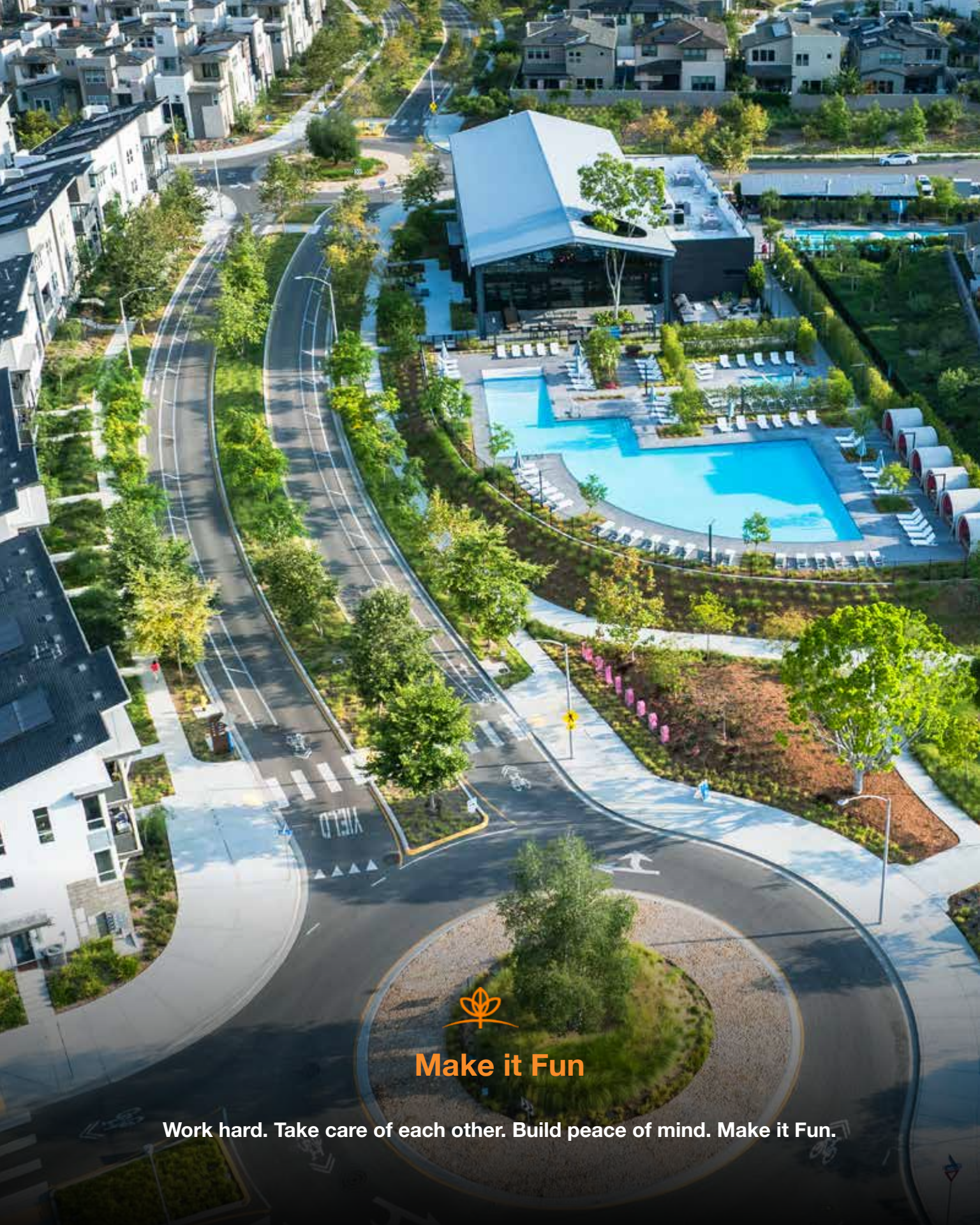
In an environment like this, it's easy for work to become nothing but pressure. When that happens long enough, people burn out. Burnout weakens teams, and weakened teams eventually weaken companies. Enjoying the people you work with isn't separate from performance—it's one of the things that allows performance to last.

Friendship Is Human
There's a simple truth in business: all things being equal, people prefer to work with their friends. That isn't manipulation—it's human nature. When relationships move beyond transactions, trust builds more naturally and communication becomes easier, especially when things get difficult.

Friendships are valuable in their own right. They make the work more enjoyable and life more meaningful. At the same time, they strengthen companies. When people share experiences together, the relationship becomes stronger than any single contract or proposal. That connection is a big part of how we deliver what we ultimately sell—peace of mind.

A Story from the Water
We invited a client to join several members of our team on a four-day boating trip through the San Juan Islands. There were no presentations and no sales agenda—just time together in a remarkable place.

We anchored in quiet coves, cooked meals, and shared long conversations that moved naturally from business to family to life experiences. By the end of the trip, something had shifted. We were no longer just contractor and client—we related as friends with shared interests and common ground.



Make it Fun

Work hard. Take care of each other. Build peace of mind. Make it Fun.

More importantly, he came to understand something deeper about our team. He saw that we would stand with him when things became difficult. That kind of trust doesn't come from a proposal or a schedule update. It comes from relationship.

Inside Our Own Walls
The same principle applies inside our company. Strong teams are built by people who know one another and enjoy working together. We celebrate milestones, recognize achievements, and take time to step back and appreciate what our teams have built.

These moments may seem small, but they matter. When someone is recognized or included, it reinforces that they are valued as a person, not just for their role. When teams step back and look at completed work, they're reminded that what they do creates something real and lasting.

Over time, those shared experiences strengthen the team. And strong teams build strong companies.

Blow Off Steam and Go Win Again
High performance always brings pressure. Deadlines, expectations, and responsibility create tension, even in the best organizations. That tension is part of doing meaningful work—but it has to be balanced. Teams need time to reset and reconnect. Sometimes that's a dinner after finishing a project. Sometimes it's an outing with a client or a shared experience outside of work. Sometimes it's simply time together after a long week.

These moments aren't wasted time. They're what allow people to come back focused, connected, and ready to perform again.

But Ethics Come First
Enjoying relationships with clients and teammates never replaces professionalism or integrity. Friendship doesn't override honesty, and good times don't excuse poor judgment.

We don't manipulate relationships or trade favors. The connections we build are genuine, and they stand on their own. Transparency and ethics always come first.

Summary
In our industry, stress is constant and turnover is common. What counters that is connection. When clients know we care about them beyond a transaction, when employees know they're valued beyond a paycheck, and when teams feel connected beyond a single project, performance improves and people choose to stay.

This company has lasted nearly fifty years because of the relationships behind the work. It comes from people who listen carefully, communicate clearly, deliver what they promise, protect one another, tell the truth, and enjoy working together.

When those things come together, work becomes more than a transaction. It becomes something people want to be part of for decades to come.

Field Rule
Work hard. Take care of each other. Build peace of mind. Make it Fun.

PERSONAL NOTES

The Six Non-Negotiables
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LANDSCAPE
DEVELOPMENT

CONSTRUCTION • MAINTENANCE • ARCHITECTURE • ARBOR CARE

SIX NON NEGOTIABLES