

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

A N D S P E C I F I E R N E W S

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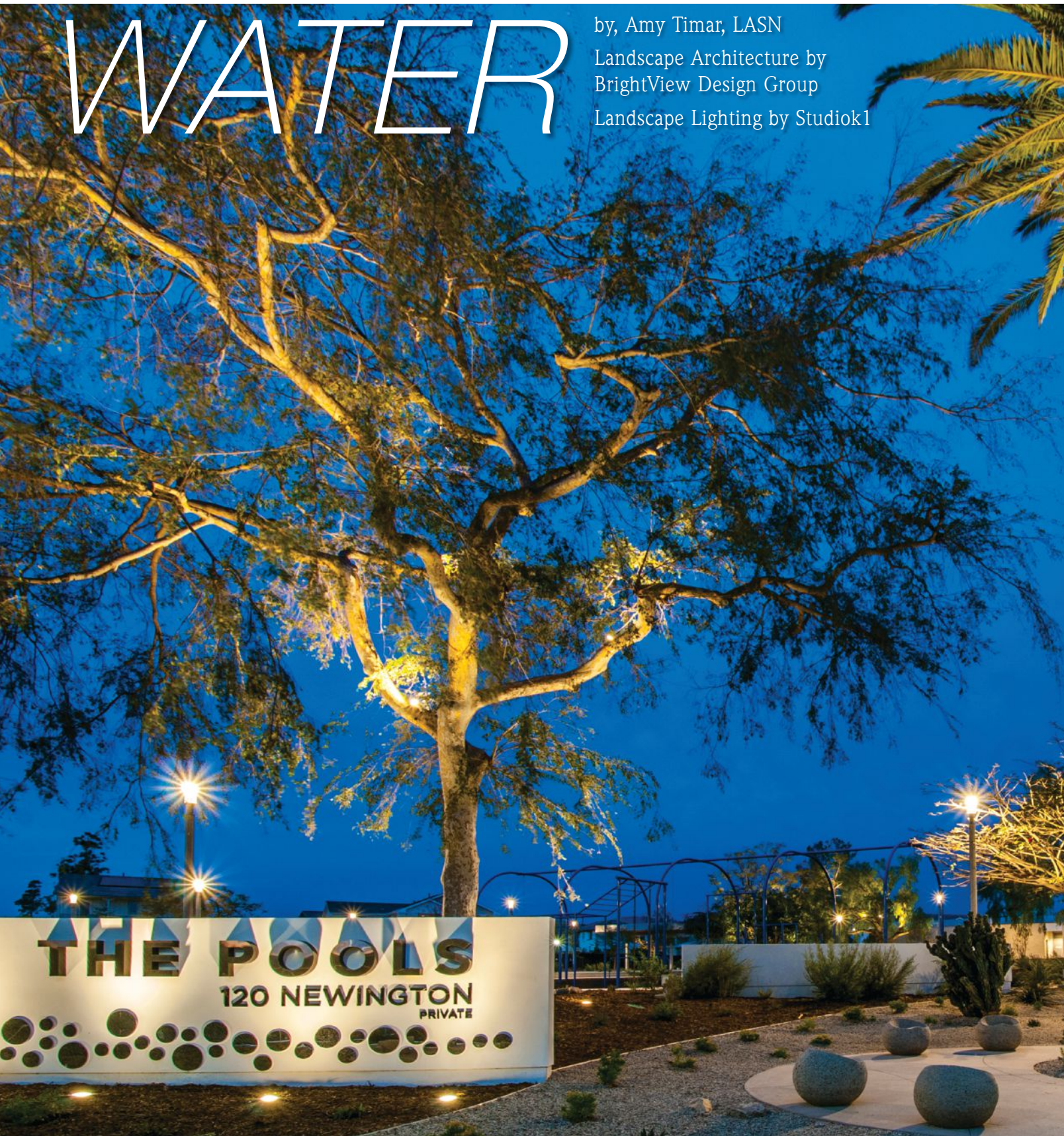
Highlighting a Park's Focus on

WATER

by, Amy Timar, LASN

Landscape Architecture by
BrightView Design Group

Landscape Lighting by Studiok1





The Pools Park in Irvine, California is one of many new parks in a community of new housing. Water and wellness were the basis of the design for a unique destination for visitors of all ages. Landscape Architects with BrightView Design Group created a focus on sustainability and a connection to the basis of all living life – water.

The Pools Park provides a social gathering place for the surrounding Irvine, California community with a focus on water and the well-being of its residents. This eight-acre space offers amenities to challenge the mind and body with an environmental conscious design. The genesis of the park started with the landscape architecture team at BrightView Design Group's desire to create a park dedicated to water while respecting it's use through conservation efforts and designs. The landscape and architectural feature elements were highlighted by lighting design firm Studiok1 through the use of low energy LED fixtures, supporting the sustainable focus of the park.

The entry sign wall is a smooth stucco with metal pinned letters uplit with ingrade wall wash fixtures. Intentional round and circular structures create a multi-functional element as seating and art. Reclaimed giant Canary Island Date Palms provide shade during the day and are uplit at night with small recessed inground LED fixtures.



Wanting to make an impact on their water standpoint while meeting the city's demand for neighborhood pools, the design team decided to conserve energy by constructing one main water feature for the entire community and connecting parks. This strategy gave the site purpose, establishing an emphasis on sustainability before the creation of the park even began.

The eight-acre water park includes a junior Olympic lap lane for competitions, a resort style pool, and a child play area pool. Opportunities for other recreational activities are found in an open lawn, beach volleyball, outdoor exercise space, and play areas. Having a desire to create as much wonder at night as the park has during the day, Studiok1 lighting design firm was brought on to

illuminate the unique elements of this park while also meeting the strict city security lighting and state energy requirements.

A simple but effective lighting design was created by highlighting focal points and evenly illuminating walkways and destinations to explore. Rather than a focus on decorative lighting, the goal was about functionality. Unobtrusive LED fixtures atop natural, wood poles tie into the overall aesthetic of the park and provide visibility to all of the park's features while remaining a small source of light, unnoticed during the day. The lighting design team installed lighting manufacturer Targetti's in-ground projector, the Keplero Mini, to define spaces while illuminating key features.

Left & Below: Curved, steel structures, roughly 60' x 30' topped with acrylic panels about 3' wide each, offer welcoming landmarks at opposite ends of the central spine running through the park. Designed to imitate trees, the structures set in the designated children's area provide a canopy of color while the pentagon shaped panels of the structures in the adult portion of the park are intended to be interpreted as water molecules. Adjustable ingrade lighting fixtures focused at the structure's "trunks" uplight and catch the starkness of the white while illuminating the colors above.



A central spine runs the length of the park, designed as an elongated plaza intended to allow park users to walk the open space, talk with neighbors, and pause to take in the many amenities. One side of the park is oriented towards adults with physical activity and programs meant to test the body. The other side is dedicated to the wellness of children with activity intended to challenge the mind; these intentional designs were created to connect children's cognitive thinking with their physical abilities, developing motor skills and function. The center of the park is a multi-generational place for the community to come together.

Purposeful designs of round, fluidlike structures and lines throughout the site complement the focus on water, even in its

absence. A maze of blue vertical steel posts represents a children's water play feature, creating a sustainable element of undesigned play. Small ingrade lighting fixtures provide an added magic during the night, playing off of shadows and light. Multi-use sculptural seating provides both art and function for the park with organic shapes and forms.

The community was the site of a former marine base and large heritage trees that were healthy enough to survive were rescued and protected from the development and stored in a nursery. Wanting to utilize those trees and provide an environmental benefit to the community, they were replanted throughout the park. Visible from neighboring homes, Canary Date Palms as



large as 30-40' create an illuminated corridor encasing the central walkway of the park and becoming a main feature. Other heritage trees such as pines and elms were highlighted with a combination of high performance inground and in-tree lights. Small pieces of artwork, nestled into planting areas, are softly illuminated against darker backdrops of the landscaped open areas. Low water and native based plants create a sustainable landscape and help to achieve the water conscious desire.

Curved steel structures at each end of the spine provide a gateway into the park with colorful acrylic panels for shade, uplit with adjustable ingrade lighting fixtures angled to capture their color. The design team's intentions were to create the illusion of trees while one structure's blue panels represent water molecules, tying the main focus and impact of the park together. The

geometric forms complement the architectural style, while the curved supports are more fluid like water. Standing out from the color palette of the park, the structures provide an added visual interest while being a welcoming element for visitors.

Adhering to the city's safety standards for outdoor lighting was a challenge as the strict uniform security code mandates a one foot-candle of light on hardscape surfaces if serving a building, and a minimum .25 foot-candle for hardscape walkways and bikeways. The desire to not lose the contrast between light and shadow became a strategy of balance. By taking advantage of areas that could allow darkness and using lighting optics to focus on pathways, the necessary areas were illuminated in a controlled way while areas of respite create a chance to escape the feeling of bright lights.



Left: Walkways encapsule the lawn, creating a 168' diameter circle around the open space used for sports and events. Defining the walkable paths are 79 pedestrian poles and the lighted, iconic heritage trees, delivering added wonder at night.

Below: Imitating water shooting out from the ground, blue vertical steel tubes create an exciting maze element for exploratory play. Small in-grade fixtures were triangulated between posts providing a different play experience at night through the variation of light and shadows.





Above & Right: Plantings were chosen for their low water use, heat resistance, and drought resilience with a mix of grass, agave, cactus, sage, and desert shrubs. Simple wood poles with a weathered grey finish and LED fixtures define the park's walkways. All area lighting has zero uplight, compliant with Dark Sky regulations and city and state codes.





Above & Left: Walkways surrounding the pool entrance feature a stamped concrete bubble design and preset light "bubbles" placed throughout. The intentional use of these small but effective fixtures achieves a source of light that adds effervescence to the ambiance of the park.



Meeting the state's green building standards code also played an integral part of the park's lighting design. Put in place for the reduction of light pollution and energy usage, the design and installation of lighting could not exceed maximum ratings for glare, uplights, and backlights. Through the selection and careful placement of efficacious LED light fixtures, the design concept met all codes while providing elements of light and dark to create a natural wayfinding for visitors. The park's primary features come to life at night by illuminating key aspects of the landscape and architectural design. 🌿

Team:
 Developer – FivePoint
 Landscape – Brightview
 Architect – LPA Design Studios
 Lighting Design – Studiok1
 Electrical Engineering – tk1sc