

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **The Bay Park Conservancy, Agency Landscape + Planning, Sweet Sparkman Architects and team, receive honor from The American Institute of Architects for The Bay “One Park for All”!**

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*The Bay is the City of Sarasota's first signature waterfront park. Located where the city's iconic Boulevard of the Arts meets the Sarasota Bay, The Bay is a living demonstration of 21st century sustainability principles, a memorable community gateway, and a loving reflection of Sarasota's unique natural and cultural context.*

### **FIRM INFO**

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**Sarasota, Florida – June 10, 2026** – The American Institute of Architects (AIA) is honoring Agency Landscape + Planning, Sweet Sparkman Architects, and its design team with a 2026 Regional & Urban Design Award for The Bay “One Park for All”, located in Sarasota, Florida.

### **URL**

agencylp.com

The Regional & Urban Design Award honors the best in urban design, regional and city planning, and community development. Agency Landscape + Planning, Sweet Sparkman Architects, and its design team were honored at the AIA Conference on Architecture & Design® (AIA26) Awards Gala, June 10 in San Diego.

"Recognition from the national AIA is a profound honor for our entire team," said Gina Ford, co-founder and principal landscape architect of Agency and The Bay's design team leader. "The Bay 'One Park for All' is a rare opportunity to shape a signature civic space at the intersection of landscape, ecology, and community. We are proud to share this award with Sweet Sparkman Architects and our extensive team of experts. This recognition affirms that design excellence, environmental resiliency and community engagement are mutually-reinforcing values."

A compelling first phase following an unprecedented and inclusive master planning process, The Bay is the City of Sarasota's first signature waterfront park. This 10-acre park brings together active, changing spaces for Sarasota's diverse community, regional trail and mobility connections, and intimate places of deep nature immersion within the City. Conceived as an active, sustainable gathering place for Sarasota's diverse community, this “One Park for All” is a model of environmental stewardship, a highly-anticipated first-phase realization of a community-driven vision, and a well-crafted expression of Sarasota's heritage. The Bay is a legacy destination now, and for many generations to come.

"This site has a long and storied history in Sarasota — but for many years, it was a place the community could see but never truly experience in full," said Jerry Sparkman, co-founder and principal of

Sweet Sparkman. "The transformation of this waterfront into The Bay Park represents the vision and inspiration of generations. We are deeply grateful to the AIA for recognizing the significance of this work, and to the City of Sarasota and The Bay Park Conservancy for the vision and trust that made it possible."

Agency and Sweet Sparkman's leadership are available for media interviews, and images can be provided upon request.

[Learn more about The Bay and the other recipients of the 2026 Regional & Urban Design Award.](#)

#### **ABOUT THE BAY PARK**

The Bay is a signature public park along Sarasota Bay. Designed to be "One Park for All," The Bay is open and accessible, free and welcoming to the full and rich diversity of the community, now and for generations to come. The Bay conserves, preserves, restores and transforms 53 acres of precious city-owned land along Sarasota Bay from what was mostly parking lot into a blue and green oasis – providing a sustainable bayfront gathering place for the community to experience and enjoy a wide range of park uses, free programs and events.

#### **ABOUT AGENCY LANDSCAPE + PLANNING**

Agency is a women-owned, mission-driven small business dedicated to addressing social equity, cultural vitality and environmental resilience through design excellence, strategic planning and community engagement. We believe that – in order to address the most challenging issues of our contemporary society – diversity and inclusion are foundational to how we see, understand and, ultimately, shape our collective experience, particularly in the public spaces, parks and streets of our cities. We seek landscape and planning opportunities that allow us to partner meaningfully with constituents, that welcome many voices and hands in the process, and that produce outcomes that are deeply connected to the richness and uniqueness of place. For more information, please visit: [agencylp.com](http://agencylp.com)

#### **ABOUT SWEET SPARKMAN ARCHITECTS**

Sweet Sparkman Architecture is an award-winning, multidisciplinary firm specializing in resilient architecture, community driven public space and cultural facilities, high end residential design, and public safety buildings. With a focus on innovation, sustainability, and contextual sensitivity, we create spaces that inspire, function beautifully, and stand the test of time. For more information, please visit: [sweetsparkman.com](http://sweetsparkman.com)

## ABOUT AIA

Founded in 1857, AIA consistently works to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings, neighborhoods, and communities. Through more than 200 international, state and local chapters, AIA advocates for public policies that promote economic vitality and public wellbeing.

AIA provides members with tools and resources to assist them in their careers and business as well as engaging civic and government leaders and the public to find solutions to pressing issues facing our communities, institutions, nation, and world. Members adhere to a code of ethics and conduct to ensure the highest professional standards.