

Arts Promenade and Café

Facts and Highlights



The **Arts Promenade and Café** create a vibrant, sustainable gathering place where students, employees and visitors can connect, recharge, create and experience the arts.

By the Numbers

3 ACRES

Approximately 130,000 square feet of new and reimagined outdoor space

34,500+ SQ. FT.

Of unused turf transformed into a water-efficient California landscape

1.5 MILLION GALLONS

Estimated water savings each year

8,000 PLANTS + 100 TREES

California native and climate-appropriate plantings throughout the Promenade

500 SQ. FT. CAFÉ

A new destination for food, gathering and campus life

From Lawn to Landscape

More than 34,500 square feet of grass—an area larger than seven basketball courts—has been replaced with a water-efficient landscape designed for Southern California.

The project includes:

- Drip irrigation that delivers water directly to plant roots
- Smart irrigation that adjusts automatically based on weather
- Bio-retention basins that capture and filter stormwater on site
- California native and climate-appropriate plants that provide year-round beauty while supporting local wildlife

Completed through the Municipal Water District of Orange County's Turf Replacement Program, the transformation is estimated to save approximately **1.5 million gallons of water annually**.

The project was featured in the Municipal Water District of Orange County's August 2026 eCurrents newsletter as one of the region's successful turf replacement projects.



Designed for Campus Life

The Promenade was shaped around a simple question: What does a campus need in the spaces between its buildings?

PLACES TO:

- Socialize** — Gather, meet and exchange ideas outside the classroom
- Recharge** — Relax, study, eat or pause between classes
- Walk** — Move easily through welcoming, accessible outdoor spaces
- Connect** — Bring together students and faculty across disciplines
- Gather** — Enjoy an enhanced café and new destination for campus life
- Experience the Arts** — Create stronger connections among music, art and learning



Connecting the Campus

The Arts Promenade establishes a new circulation spine connecting the Fine Arts Village and athletic fields with the larger campus.

Universal accessibility is integrated throughout the space, creating a welcoming experience for people of all abilities. A variety of seating, gathering areas and quieter spaces provides opportunities for both planned activities and spontaneous connections.

The Promenade also supports the vision of Inspire 2035, establishing a future connection to the Jeffrey Open Space Trail (JOST) and the planned Student Services and Student Union quad.

The Café & Mural: Honoring Irvine's History

The café draws inspiration from Irvine's original agricultural buildings and packing houses. Its distinctive mural is based on a 1938 aerial photograph of the Irvine Ranch. The design reinterprets the historic patchwork of fields and orchards through layers of aluminum and board-formed concrete:

- Solid panels represent row crops
- Perforated panels represent orchards
- Exposed concrete recalls fallow fields, roads and hedge rows
- Panels extend at varying depths, allowing the mural to change with the light throughout the day
- A warm, earthy finish connects the agricultural story with the campus color palette

Among the Trees

More than 100 trees now provide shade, character and habitat throughout the Promenade, including:

- Coast Live Oak** — California's signature native oak, capable of living for centuries
- Palo Verde** — A drought-adapted tree whose green bark can photosynthesize
- Cork Oak** — The species whose renewable bark is harvested to produce cork
- Monterey Pine** — Native to only a few small areas of the California coast
- Sycamore** — Selected for its broad canopy and dappled shade

One of the largest Coast Live Oaks arrived in a 72-inch box, stood approximately 13 feet tall and wide, and was placed by crane.



Details Worth Noticing

Look closely throughout the Promenade and you'll find thoughtful details:

- Board-formed concrete cast against real wood planks, preserving the wood grain in every panel
- Ipe hardwood decking, known for its exceptional density and durability
- Translucent café roof panels that bring in daylight while reducing heat gain
- Built-in platforms that provide a permanent outdoor setting for student and faculty artwork

Built for the Future

The Arts Promenade and Café reflects Irvine Valley College's commitment to sustainability, responsible use of resources and creating welcoming spaces that strengthen connection and belonging. More than a pathway, it is a new campus destination—a place to gather, create, recharge and connect for generations to come.