

Finding Middle Ground Design Competition

Design Brief



Summary

In Regina, missing middle housing typologies were once a commonly built form. Duplexes, fourplexes and small apartment buildings were interspersed throughout residential areas. If you explore several of Regina's more mature neighbourhoods, you can still find some great examples that blend well with their neighbouring surroundings. But the elevation of the single-family dwelling in the mid-twentieth century as the most desirable form of housing, saw zoning bylaws created to protect neighbourhoods from what was then viewed as the less desirable multi-unit dwellings. This saw middle housing construction almost vanish from our city's landscape and what was constructed was pushed out from the established neighbourhoods.

Over the past decade, as the housing affordability crisis became more critical and housing options within existing neighbourhoods became limited, cities and towns have rediscovered the value of missing middle housing. By rezoning to allow missing middle housing in established neighbourhoods that are currently zoned for single family dwellings, increased density can be achieved by creating more housing options for residents. Also, missing middle housing can also help to revive neighbourhoods that have experienced population decline due to their monoculture of housing typologies.



Land Acknowledgement

The City of Regina acknowledges we are on the traditional lands of the Treaty 4 Territory, a Treaty signed with 35 First Nations across Southern Saskatchewan and parts of Alberta and Manitoba, and the original lands of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dakota, Nakota, Lakota and the homeland of the Métis. The City of Regina owes its strength and vibrancy to these lands and the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory as well as settlers from around the world who continue to be welcomed here and call Regina home.



Competition Objectives

The City of Regina is presenting a design competition to solicit ideas that explore solutions to two of the most urgent challenges facing cities worldwide: housing affordability and sustainable housing options.

Holding a design competition with a specific focus on missing middle housing forms that fit into the context of our existing neighbourhoods will provide the following benefits:

- It tests the City's recent zoning bylaw changes and identifies possible changes required in the future.
- Explores design options for the most common lot sizes in our central neighbourhoods.
- Promotes underutilized missing middle housing typologies not currently constructed in our city.
- Provides public awareness of missing middle housing and the variety of design options available.
- Promotes the attributes of good infill residential design and counters the perceived issues of infill housing.
- Demonstrates that when designed within the context of its surroundings, missing middle housing can be a welcome addition bringing vibrancy and sustainability to neighbourhoods that have experienced stagnation in recent years.
- Bringing gentle density to our established core neighbourhoods provides opportunities for economic growth by supporting new or existing small businesses.



Regina Profile and History

Regina is the capital of Saskatchewan and the 16th largest city in Canada with a population of 226,404 (Source: 2021 Census Profile for Regina Census Subdivision). Regina is in the south-central area of the province. The city covers an area of 182.42 square kilometers. Saskatchewan is in the middle of the prairie provinces with Alberta to the west and Manitoba to the east. The province borders the American states of Montana and North Dakota. Latitude: 50 degrees 26 min north Longitude: 104 degrees 40 min west Elevation: 577 m above sea level.

Indigenous people have lived in this region for thousands of years. This area was one of the important places where Indigenous people would come to hunt the roaming herds of bison. They began to stack the long bison bones into large piles in an effort to honour the animals' spirit as the bison herds were becoming depleted due to overhunting by non-Indigenous hunters. Indigenous peoples named the area *oskana ka-asastēki*, which roughly translates to "bone piles". European explorers, fur traders and settlers translated this to Pile of Bones.

European settlement began in the 1880s as an agricultural community and served as a distribution point for farm materials and produce. As the settlement grew and became established, it was renamed Regina (Latin for "queen") after Queen Victoria, who was the British monarch at the time.

Regina became a city in 1903. Two years later, Saskatchewan became a province and chose Regina as its capital. Today, this diverse and vibrant community is one of Canada's fastest growing major cities.



Market Conditions

Prices: The benchmark price of housing in June 2025 reached \$343,200, an eight per cent increase compared to June 2024.

Climate



Temperatures: Average highs in July reach around 26°C (79°F), while average lows in January can drop to -18°C (0°F). Temperatures can fluctuate significantly, even within the same day.



Precipitation: Regina receives moderate precipitation, with an average of 398 mm annually. June is typically the wettest month, with an average of 75 mm of precipitation. Snowfall is common during the winter months, with an average of 116 cm (45 inches).



Sunshine: Regina is known for being one of the sunniest capital cities in Canada, with substantial sunshine hours throughout the year, particularly during the summer months.



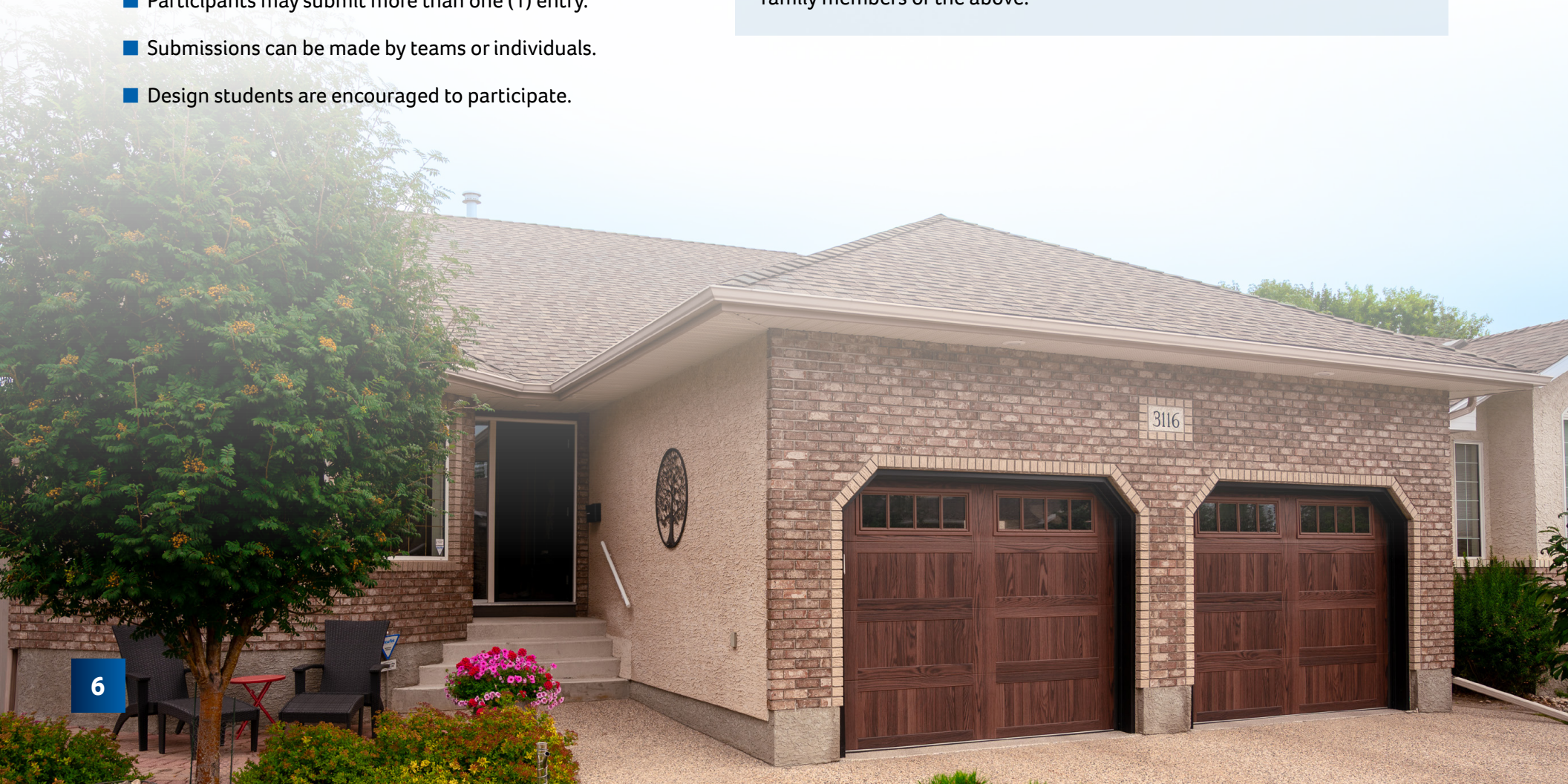
Wind: Regina is known for its windy conditions, particularly during the winter months.

Eligibility for Participation

This is a competition open to anyone.

- Participants are not required to be registered professionals.
- Participants may submit more than one (1) entry.
- Submissions can be made by teams or individuals.
- Design students are encouraged to participate.

City of Regina staff, steering committee members and jurors are ineligible to participate in the competition. This includes immediate family members of the above.



Competition Categories Parameters

For the competition, we are providing four (4) different residential lot configurations for consideration. Each brings with them their own unique challenges.

We invite participants to choose one (1) of the four (4) options presented below for your submission. However, participants are welcome to submit designs for all four (4) options.

Regina Zoning Standards for Middle Housing				
	Competition Categories			
	Lane Access/Corner	Lane Access/Interior	Front Access/Corner	Front Access/Interior
Lot Frontage	15.4 metres	7.62 metres	18.0 metres	15.4 metres
Lot Area	587 sq. m	290 sq. m	605 sq. m	587 sq. m
Height	11.0 metres	9.5 metres	11.0 metres	9.5 metres
FAR	1.5	0.85	1.5	0.85
Site Coverage	55%	50%	55%	50%
Front Setback	4.5 metres	4.5 metres	6.0 metres	6.0 metres

Regina Zoning Standards for Middle Housing				
	Competition Categories			
	Lane Access/Corner	Lane Access/Interior	Front Access/Corner	Front Access/Interior
Rear Setback	3.5 metres	3.5 metres	5.0 metres	5.0 metres
Side Setback	Flankage: 0.45 metres	1.2 metres	Flankage: 0.45 metres	1.2 metres
Other Side Setback	1.5 metres	1.2 metres	1.5 metres	Other: 1.2 metres
Dwelling Units Allowable	Min 4, Max 8	Min 3, Max 4	Min 4, Max 8	Min 3, Max 6
Sketches				

Desirable Design Standards/Elements:

- The first floor should be elevated no more than 1.37 metres above ground level, creating a welcoming, approachable entry for all.
- Architectural features like windowsills and eaves should be set back at least 0.45 metres from property lines, ensuring privacy and aesthetic harmony with the surrounding environment.
- Incorporate design elements such as inviting ground-level entrances and/or spacious balconies, fostering a strong, vibrant connection to the street and encouraging social interaction.
- Building Code
 - Should meet the requirements of NBC 2020
 - Should be designed to meet NEC 2025 – Level 2
- Project Cost
 - High level construction estimate cost

City of Regina Zoning Bylaw

Development Context:

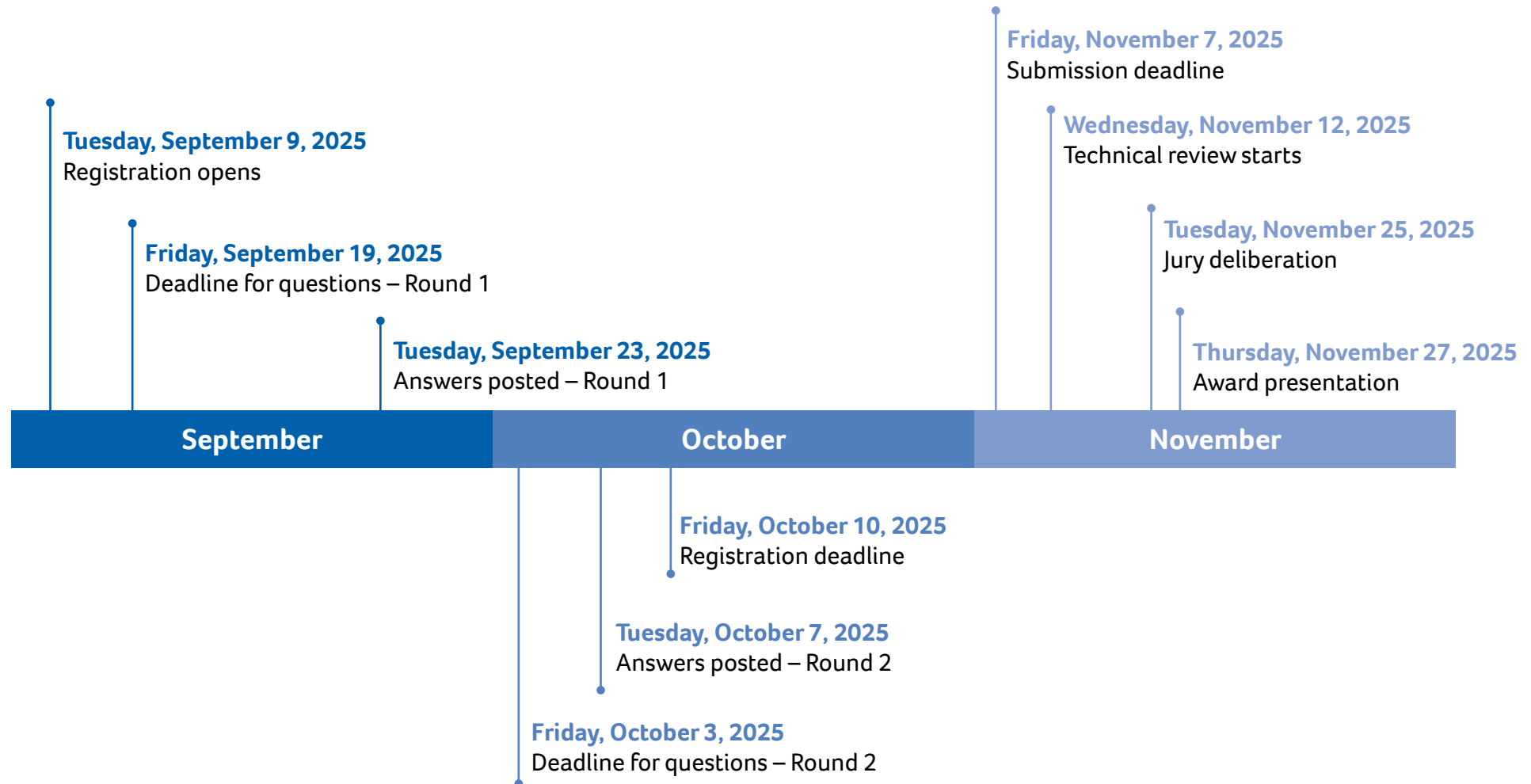


The two (2) lane access site options are typical of Regina's pre-war neighbourhoods. Their streetscapes were intimate and leafy, defined by narrow, elongated residential lots that gave neighbourhoods a tight-knit, walkable feel. Homes tended to be modest in scale and set close together, often fronted by porches and shaded by large, mature trees that lined the sidewalks. Vehicle access was typically handled through rear lanes, which preserved the rhythm of the streetscape and kept garages and driveways hidden from view.



The two (2) front access site options are typical of Regina's post-war neighbourhoods. It was then that Regina shifted toward a more spacious and automobile-oriented suburban model. Lots became wider, with houses set farther apart, and the focus moved to vehicle access directly from the street, often with prominent front driveways and attached garages. This change opened streetscapes, but also made them feel less sheltered, as tree canopies were less dense and front yards were dominated by driveways and lawns rather than pedestrian pathways.

Competition Timeline



Registration Instructions

- All participants must register by downloading this [form](#) and email it to FindingMiddleGround@Regina.ca prior to 5 p.m. (CST/Saskatchewan), October 10, 2025.
- Submissions will not be accepted without prior registration.

Submission Instructions

- All submissions must be made by email prior to 5 p.m. (CST/Saskatchewan), November 7, 2025.
- There is no limit on the number of submissions you may enter.
- Submissions may be made in one or more categories.
- Each submission must be made in separate emails to FindingMiddleGround@Regina.ca
- There are no fees to enter the competition.

Note:

The intellectual property rights of the design submitted are kept with the architects and designers. By submitting a design to the competition and signing our participation agreement, participants keep their intellectual property rights, but grant us the right to advertise, publish and print their design with acknowledgement of the designer.

Submission Package Formatting

- Maximum of 10 pages
- File size 10MB max
- PDF format
- 200 dpi (min)
- 11" x 17" landscape orientation
- All units on drawings and in calculations must be metric
- Submitted drawings must not include any identification markers such as logos, names or signatures.



Submission Package Formatting

Narrative:

- Project Title
- Category
- Written rationale addressing criteria:
 - Creativity and context
 - Aesthetics
 - Affordability
 - Accessibility and universal design
 - Sustainability
- Project summary tables that include:
 - Gross floor area
 - Total floor area
 - Total number of units
 - Total number of parking spaces
 - Key design features

Drawings:

- Floor plans that include:
 - Interior and exterior walls
 - Doors and windows
 - Critical exterior dimensions
 - Room names
- Site plans that include:
 - Dimensions and setbacks
 - Parking
 - Key features
- Landscaping plan that includes:
 - Hard landscaping (asphalt, concrete, pavers)
 - Soft landscaping (plantings and ground cover)
 - Key notes, as required
 - Elevations (for all cardinal directions)
 - Building mass drawing

Renderings:

- Exterior (minimum two required)
- Interior (optional)

Awards and Payments to Competitors

Category Prizes	
First Prize	\$10,000 CAD (One award for each category)
Second Prize	\$5,000 CAD (One award for each category)
Third Prize	\$2,500 CAD (One award for each category)
3 Honourable Mentions	\$1,000 CAD (Three awards for each category)

Judging Evaluation Criteria

The Jury will use the following criteria to evaluate each submission in each category.

- 1 Lane access/corner
- 2 Lane access/interior
- 3 Front access/corner
- 4 Front access/interior

Creativity and Context (20 points)

- Is the design innovative in its exploration of the site's limitations?
- Does the form and style complement the existing neighbourhood's vernacular?
- Are any new building methods or materials employed?

Aesthetics (20 points)

- Does the design integrate well with the existing neighbourhood?
- Is it visually appealing?
- Is it respectful of scale, setbacks and surrounding architectural styles?

Affordability (20 points)

- Can the units be built using realist materials and construction methods?
- Can the units be built in an infill context without disrupting neighbouring properties?

Accessibility and Universal Design (20 points)

- Does the proposal incorporate universal design principles?
- Are the units designed for day-to-day use? Do they provide sufficient natural light, storage and recreation space?

Sustainability (20 points)

- Does the design incorporate sustainable materials?
- Does the proposal include energy efficiency strategies (i.e. passive solar strategies)?
- Are innovative approaches to sustainability employed?

The jury will have flexibility in the prizes awarded and honourable mentions to highlight the features that exemplify specific criteria as noted above. These features will be highlighted in the jury statements. They may declare two winners and split the winner and runner up prize money equally between the two or vary the number of winners. However, the total value of the prize money shall not be reduced.

The jury shall have unlimited authority and discretion as the final arbiter of the competition. Its decisions will be final. A chairperson will be appointed from the jury whose role will be managing the group's work.

Jury Members



Pat Hanson (Founding Principal and Creative Director BFA MArch OAA AAA FRAIC) is a founding partner of gh3*. Under her leadership, the firm has established a reputation for design integrity across a range of building typologies and through all scales of practice. She is the architect of institutional, infrastructural and residential projects that create meaningful connections between architecture and landscape within the urban realm. Exemplary projects include the internationally recognized June Callwood Park in Toronto, the Trinity College Quadrangle at the University of Toronto, the Governor General's Medal-awarded projects Borden Park Pavilion and the Borden Park Natural Swimming Pool in Edmonton and the Cherry Street Storm Water Facility in Toronto.

Pat is an expert communicator of compelling design visions that are both environmentally and socially sustainable. She is a strong and insightful advocate for the potential for built form to rise above the merely functional, to integrate the pragmatic with the poetic, and to achieve an aesthetic impact that brings pleasure to everyday uses. For over 30 years, she has led clients and interdisciplinary design teams through complex programs, negotiating extensive public consultation processes to achieve internationally recognized, award-winning projects, whether at the scale of infrastructure or the sheltering of a community program.



design team for the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology which attained numerous awards including the Governor Generals Medal in Architecture. In 2005 Alfred established Alfred Waugh Architect, a 100 per cent Indigenous owned architecture practice. In 2012 Alfred incorporated the firm and change the name to Formline Architecture + Urbanism Inc. The firm has developed a reputation for finely crafted cultural and sustainable buildings including the UBC Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre which garnered the first Governor Generals Medal for Architecture awarded to an Indigenous owned firm. In recent years the firm has branched out designing projects from coast to coast in Canada and in Washington State.



Recent projects range from a missing middle housing program for the City of Burnaby to cultural guidelines for Vancouver's infill ʔəyálməxw/Iyálməxw/Jericho Land, the largest Indigenous-led real estate project in Canada. With her clients, her projects have been honoured with awards by the Canadian Institute of Canada, Planning Institute of BC, Union of BC Municipalities, Canadian Brownfield Network, and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.



Rayleen Hill is the founding principal of RHAD Architects located in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The firm just celebrated its 15th anniversary. Rayleen also serves as an occasional design studio sessional instructor and guest critic at Dalhousie University Architecture School. RHAD Architects undertakes a variety of projects across a variety of scales and budgets, including residential, commercial, and small community pavilions. The office has received four Lieutenant Governor's Awards and was recognized with the RAIC Emerging Architect Award in 2017. The firm's beginnings were marked with a winning competition entry for a Skating Pavilion in the North Saskatchewan River Valley in Edmonton. The office has designed numerous houses that are net zero, net zero ready, or meet passive house standards.

Regardless of the project size or budget, Rayleen believes that design must extend beyond the built form itself and into the environment it informs, the lives it impacts and the community it truly empowers. It's not just about the obvious spaces, but also the spaces in-between.



Chris Weibe is a founding partner of AtLRG Architecture, based in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The firm focuses on mixed-use urban infill projects, including adaptive re-use of heritage buildings, as well as the conversion of vacant downtown office towers into residential apartments.

AtLRG revels in the challenges of historic oddities, present complexities and future visions of their home city. As their work is increasingly concentrated on housing, their core methodology of employing a rational, minimalist design approach, with the imperative of achieving more with less, has proven beneficial. AtLRG view local economic constraints as opportunities for innovation that give rise to unexpected and exciting results. The team insists that all of their work, large or small, permanent or ephemeral, should serve, elevate, and enrich the lives of people.

Technical Advisors

The following technical advisors from City Administration will be available to the jury for technical questions arising during the evaluation process. Individuals will be determined in the following categories:

- Code Consultant
- Zoning Consultant
- Cultural Consultant
- Sustainability Consultant
- Construction Consultant

Post-Competition Activities

Following the competition, a jury report will be prepared and released through media releases, social media and website postings on the winning entries. We are currently exploring other possible options for sharing and celebrating the winning designs.

