

# 2021 HALIFAX URBAN DESIGN AWARDS

## Award Categories

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The Halifax Regional Municipality is calling for submissions to the 2021 Halifax Urban Design Awards, which celebrate urban design excellence in the region for projects completed after January 1, 2013. Due to the current public health restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings, the awards program has been revised to continue in a virtual format in 2021.

Each category has different eligibility requirements and individual criteria for Award selection. Designers, developers, sponsors, students and owners of projects selected as award winners will receive an Award of Excellence or Honourable Mention in one of the eight categories.

Projects from all municipal communities will be eligible for awards, whether they are in the Regional Centre or a smaller rural community. Categories I to V and VIII correspond with the [National Urban Design Awards](#). Halifax Award of Excellence winners in those categories may qualify for a fee waiver at the national awards.

Urban Design projects in the Halifax Regional Municipality will be recognized in the following eight categories:

1. **Urban Design Plans**
2. **Urban Architecture**
3. **Civic Design Projects**
4. **Urban Elements**
5. **Community Connections & Initiatives**
6. **Heritage Restoration Projects**
7. **Heritage Adaptive Re-use Projects**
8. **Student Projects**

In addition to being evaluated based on each category's individual criteria, all successful nominees must demonstrate the **urban design goals** described below:

- design that is **human scaled**
- design that **reflects community context**, and
- design that **inspires civic awareness and participation**

Details for each category are outlined below:

### 1. **Urban Design Plans**

This category is for a plan or study of a significant area within the Halifax Regional Municipality that provides a development or redevelopment strategy for inspired urban transformation in the mid-to-long-term. Urban design studies, master plans, redevelopment strategies, and community plans with the potential for significant impact on the community's sustainability or development, are eligible in this category

Eligibility: The plan or study must have been completed after January 1, 2013 within the boundaries of the municipality.

Criteria - The primary criteria for assessing the merit of the plan will be:

- **comprehensiveness:** addressing a wide range of factors within the plan which affect development
- **innovative approach:** proposals that highlight new ideas and/or approaches to interventions in the city
- **clarity of presentation:** understandable, readable and well-illustrated graphically

## 2. Urban Architecture

This category is for a building (or group of buildings) of high architectural standards which achieves urban design excellence through its relationship with its immediate surroundings because of its site, massing, and pedestrian amenities. The building will also contribute to defining a special relationship with the neighbouring urban fabric.

The project sits within the boundaries of Halifax Regional Municipality and was designed by an architect. Special consideration will be given to buildings that also achieve, or are capable of achieving, a green building rating. This category is open only to registered architects and a license number or proof of registration is required.

Eligibility: The new building, renovated building, or complex of buildings must have been completed within the Municipality after January 1, 2013.

Criteria - The primary criteria for assessing architectural projects will be:

- **compatibility** with the urban initiative
- **positive contribution** to the public realm
- **architectural excellence**  
**demonstration of the value of urban design** – how the urban design plan directed and influenced the building

## 3. Civic Design Projects

This category is for civic improvement projects such as parks, public space, civil engineering or environmental infrastructure, streetscape design, etc. which have been implemented as a result of a larger urban design plan or initiative.

Eligibility: a construction project completed or installed after January 1, 2013 within the boundaries of the Halifax Regional Municipality and designed by an architect, landscape architect, or an engineer. This category is open to registered design professionals (architects, engineers, registered planners and landscape architects). A license number and/or proof of registration is required.

Criteria: The primary criteria for assessing the merit of the project will be:

- **compatibility** with the urban plan
- **positive contribution** to the public realm
- **design excellence**
- **demonstration of the value of urban design** – how the urban design plan/initiative directed and influenced the space or the objects.

#### 4. Urban Elements

This category is for single, small-scale pieces of a building or landscape that contribute significantly to the quality of the public realm in the Halifax Regional Municipality. The category includes small and modest elements such as street furniture, lighting elements, interpretation media, memorials, public art or other forms of intervention that contribute to the beautification, sustainability, enjoyment, and appreciation of the urban environment. Projects can be of a temporary (but not ephemeral) or permanent nature.

Eligibility: Projects can be of a temporary (but not ephemeral) or permanent nature but installed after January 1, 2013 within the boundaries of the municipality.

Criteria: The primary criteria for assessing the proposals will be:

- **positive contribution** to the public realm
- **design excellence**
- **innovation and uniqueness**

#### 5. Community Connections & Initiatives

This category is for any built project, however modest, initiated and implemented by a community-based organization that enhances the public realm in the Halifax Regional Municipality. Examples include, but are not limited to: street improvement plans, public art, commemorative or interpretive installations, and environmental initiatives.

Eligibility: The improvement must have been completed after January 1, 2013 within the boundaries of the municipality.

Criteria: The primary criteria for assessing the merit of the project will be:

- **broad community involvement** – demonstration of how the community-at-large was involved and supported the improvements
- **positive contribution** to the public realm
- **conceptual clarity and execution** of the improvement
- **innovation and uniqueness** of the built project

#### 6. Heritage Restoration Projects

This category is for heritage restoration projects in which an important heritage resource or group of resources have been carefully and expertly returned to their original beauty and quality (interior and exterior) while contributing to the successful urban design of the community. A heritage resource can include but is not limited to buildings or urban elements, located within the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Eligibility: The heritage restoration project must have been completed after January 1, 2013 within the boundaries of the municipality.

Criteria: The primary criteria for assessing the merit of the project will be:

- **architectural and technical excellence** of restoration
- **positive contribution** to the public realm
- **demonstration of the value of heritage restoration and urban design**

## 7. Heritage Adaptive Re-use Projects

This category is for heritage adaptive re-use projects where a heritage resource has been thoughtfully and expertly adapted for a new use while maintaining the integrity and important character elements of the resource. Heritage resources include but are not limited to buildings or urban elements, located in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Eligibility: The heritage restoration project must have been completed after January 1, 2013 within the boundaries of the municipality.

Criteria: The primary criteria for assessing the merit of the project will be:

- **positive contribution** to the public realm and urban design of the city
- **technical and design excellence** of heritage re-use
- **optimization** of integration between heritage elements and contemporary additions and surrounding fabric

## 8. Student Projects

The category includes urban design projects from individual students or groups of students enrolled in a University located within the Halifax Regional Municipality. Projects must address local context.

Eligibility: Students enrolled in an accredited program in architecture, landscape architecture, or urban planning, in the past two years.

Criteria: The primary criteria for assessing the merit of the project will be:

- **community involvement**
- **positive contribution** to the public realm
- **conceptual clarity and design excellence** additions and surrounding fabric
- **innovation and uniqueness**