2023

URBAN DESIGN AWARDS

LONDON. ONTARIO. CANADA



AWARD WINNERS & HONOURABLE MENTIONS

London CANADA



URBAN DESIGN AWARDS

LONDON. ONTARIO. CANADA

URBAN ARCHITECTURE

Entries in this category incliude: an individual building, or a composition of buildings (of any size), which achieves urban design excellence through its relationship to the public realm, its massing, detailing and pedestrian amenity. Entrants should document and highlight how the building, or group of buildings, contributes to the quality of place. All types of buildings are eligible whether "landmark" or "background," new construction or a restoration/ transformation/adaptive-reuse. Building types could include: Residential (single-family, multi-unit, apartment), Mixed-use, Commercial, Institutional or Industrial.

The primary criteria for assessing the merit of entries in this category will be:

- Positive contribution to the public realm/quality of place;
- Architectural excellence;
- Demonstration of fulfilling a clearly articulated urban design intent.

URBAN ARCHITECTURE CATEGORY: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS

ZERIN PLACE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.; Zelinka Priamo Ltd.; Arthur Lierman Landscape Architecture







URBAN ARCHITECTURE

ABSTRACT

Overview

Zerin Place, located at the corner of Clarke Road and Eastwood Street in the Argyle neighbourhood in east London, is a four-storey 65-unit residential building that includes both 1 and 2-bedroom affordable and market-rate units. Zerin Place is designed as a space of inclusivity, with thirty percent of the units and all common spaces of the building fully barrier-free. Highly energy efficient, Zerin Place includes rooftop solar panels that are intentionally visible from the street.

Zerin Place frames the public realm with two wings along two street frontages. The wings, which don't quite meet at the corner, reveal a floating cube hovering over the glass lobby, marking the main address and public entry to the building and animating the southeast street corner. The building mass is articulated with slender black columns and matching mullions to emphasize its floating quality and reinforce its accessibility and transparency to the public realm. The street frontages are wrapped with tree lines and generous landscape buffering, including landscaped garden walls that reflect the materiality of the building. Zerin employs low-impact development landscape features to manage site drainage.

The building's design approach emphasizes community in a variety of aspects, both externally in the building's articulation and internally with the spacious and naturally lit shared spaces. The main entrance, to which there is a paved pathway from Clarke Road, features a recessed porch-like soffit condition inviting residents and visitors into the space. Features include the spacious and transparent lobby volume, and a large internal courtyard, adjacent to a generous interior common room, that is protected by the interior wings of the building. The courtyard includes an arcade-like covered walkway buffering the indoor and outdoor common spaces, benches, and landscape furniture, as well as interlocking paving, planting beds, and trees dispersed throughout the patio. Balconies facing inward to the courtyard space promote active interaction between the building occupants and invoke a sense of community.

Zerin's strong presence along two street frontages and its powerful expression of inclusivity and sense of place fulfill two key accomplishments: the creation of a successful example of dignified affordable seniors housing, and a vision for future development for more inclusive and sustainable housing in the Argyle neighbourhood and the City of London.

URBAN ARCHITECTURE CATEGORY: HONOURABLE MENTIONS

SUMMERSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc,; Arthur Lierman Landscape Architecture







URBAN ARCHITECTURE

ABSTRACT

Overview

Located in the heart of the Summerside Community in London, Summerside Public School and Children's Centre is a two-storey public school that includes 18 classrooms, 4 kindergarten classrooms, a gymnasium, an adjoining activity room, and a fully-glazed learning commons that overlooks the surrounding neighbourhood. The building has been designed to support the growth of the community.

Following the curve of Meadowgate Boulevard, the building is set back to provide a drop-off laneway, buffered with landscaping, which addresses the significant flow of neighbourhood traffic. Each side of the building provides separate vehicular entrances and parking for staff.

Summerside is arranged programmatically with two separate entrances serving the public school (the 'big porch') and childcare centre (the 'little porch'). The double-height exterior porch to the public school functions as the public entry to the school; students enter the two-storey daylit lobby which serves as the focal point and informal gathering space for the school. Beyond the lobby, the school is organized into administrative, learning, and ancillary spaces. The childcare centre, comprised of infant, toddler, and preschool areas, is marked by a change in building scale. The childcare spaces encourage explorative and imaginative play which translates outside with the design of natural wood playgrounds.

The learning commons, designed as a flexible learning space, supports the needs of a diverse and growing student population encouraging new forms of collaboration and interaction. The fully-glazed façade is interspersed with sunshade fins that allow for the controlled infusion of light into the space.

ASPIRE FOOD GROUP PRODUCTION FACILITY

architects Tillmann Ruth Robinson







URBAN ARCHITECTURE

ABSTRACT

Overview

In one of London's industrial precincts, marking the corner of Innovation Drive and Concept Drive, sits the largest cricket production facility in the world. Aspire Food Group is pioneering the insect agriculture industry and their London Ontario facility represents the smartest and most environmentally responsible protein production system on the planet.

From an urban design perspective this building operates at 3 scales: the pedestrian focused one-storey entry pavilion, defined by its blue cladding and sitting closest to Innovation Drive; the neighbourhood scaled two storey datum, defined by digital patterned cladding and marked with 'A' styled blue vertical ribbons; and the industrial precinct scaled production tower, which is designed to offer a line of site from Veterans Memorial Parkway.

The one-storey entry pavilion serves as the front door to the facility, and includes a pedestrian scaled canopy and extensive windows offering a connection between the indoors and outdoors for those in the building and passing by. The two-storey portion of the building is in line with the scale of adjacent facilities, and includes a two-storey portion to the north and animated cladding around the base of the production tower. The industrial scaled tower is clad in a light colour to minimize its impact on the skyline, however, it is positioned closest to Concept Drive in order to define the street edge and offer visibility to the Aspire branding mounted proudly at the buildings highest point.

The three scales of building are reflective of the functionality of the building, in that the building is divided into different zones to help mitigate risk during production by preventing direct external access to the automated production line. The production line includes a full suite of state-of-the-art industrial automation and robotics technology all operating independently in a climate controlled, indoor vertical agriculture system filled with living organisms. The footprint for this world-class production process is just a small fraction of the size of the space typically required to produce this scale of protein.

CIVIC DESIGN PROJECTS

Public spaces including the development, redevelopment or significant improvement of parks and open spaces, plazas, public infrastructure, environmental infrastructure and civil engineering projects (or elements thereof) which provide for exemplary design. Projects may be on public or private property but must be accessible to the general public and visitors.

Examples are:

- Courtyards
- Plazas
- Trails
- Mews
- Parks
- Streetscapes

CIVIC DESIGN PROJECTS CATEGORY: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS

EAST LIONS PARK AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

Ron Koudys Landscape Architects; MJMA Landscape Architecture; MJMA Architecture & Design; a+LiNK Architecture Inc.







CIVIC DESIGN PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

Overview

Smaller is Better
The City of London 2009 Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan identified the need for a larger multipurpose recreation centre in the east/southeast quadrant of the city. Public consultation in 2011 led to the community's discerning decision to divide a sizeable multi-use project into two separate facilities that could appropriately enhance existing community space. The public helped select the existing East Lions Park in the Argyle neighbourhood as one of the sites — entailing the replacement of its endof-life outdoor pool with a new community centre and extensive rejuvenation of the park. This approach eschews the recent trend of consolidation and regionalization of infrastructure and the notion that 'bigger is better'. It delivers appropriately scaled and programmed amenities that re-naturalize the site and enhance the character of the community.

Connecting Park, Building & Community
Bounded on three sides by residential streets and on the fourth by the new community centre, the park site is a significant open space embedded within the neighbourhood. The design process had to ensure its renovation was well integrated both physically and functionally with these surroundings and with the new community centre. The park's perimeter is ringed by stands of mature trees: our public engagement sessions revealed that safeguarding these was a priority for the community and subsequently drove the location and configuration of the community centre, with each face of the building benefitting from the tree canopy.

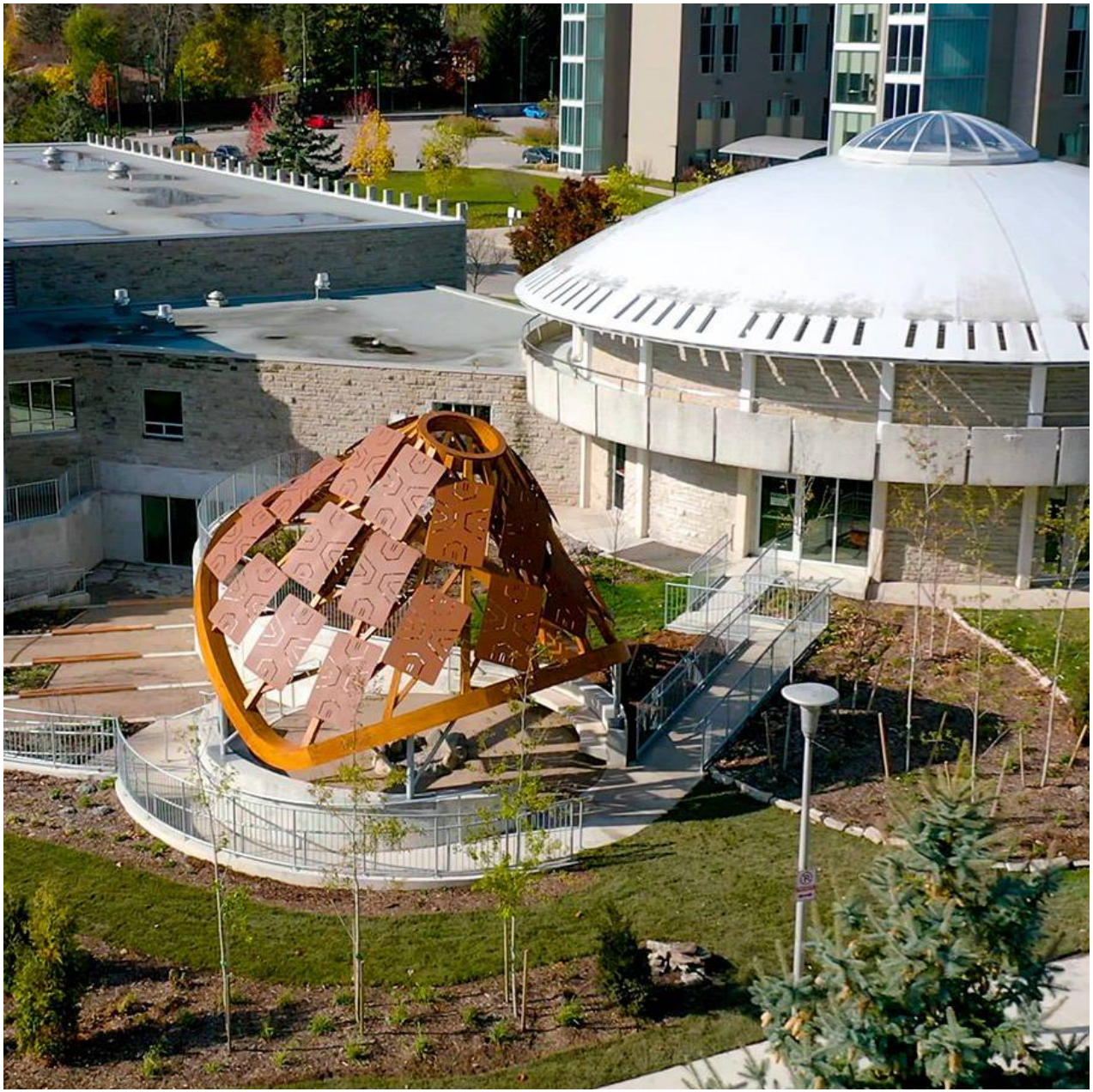
The design added parking but limited it to the eastern third of the site to optimize the park space. The existing park's interior was largely free of vegetation, which allowed for the relocation of recreational amenities to better suit the site and the addition of new ones, including tennis and pickleball courts, a ping pong table, and a basketball court that converts into a winter ice rink. There are now inviting grassy terraces defined by low walls that double as seating. The park's courtyard features a new public artwork, Welcome Hands by David Bobier – conveying themes of community and craft that also resonate in the interior and exterior textures and materiality of the community centre, as well as in the rooms it houses for the East London Artisans.

New pedestrian pathways provide a recreational walking loop and connect to important nodes and crossing points on the adjacent streets. The pathways also lead directly to a new plaza fronting the community centre and leading into the generous lobby, making park and building continuous. A 35m bench runs along the long elevation of the community centre's aquatic hall and is shaded by an overhang, creating a weather-protected space for families using the park and play structure to rest and gather. Pedestrian-level lighting on the major walkways provides safety and increases the park's presence as an important destination in the community. The playground is designed to be barrier-free, while the hardscape pathway system is also accessible and has a paved viewing area adjacent to the athletic pitch, allowing persons in wheelchairs to seamlessly join others in the enjoyment of the park.

Transforming Challenges into Features
The water table level varies significantly across the site, which caused drainage problems in the past and made the athletic fields unusable for parts of the year. To address the hydrological issues, the site was re-graded and stormwater infrastructure added in key areas. Moreover, rather than bury the stormwater system out of sight, the design makes it a feature — a dry pond /rain garden in the southwest corner of the park. Collecting and detaining stormwater before directing it into the municipal storm sewer, the pond area includes a dock-like observation platform with colourful lounge chairs and faux-wood pavers, to encourage visitors to rest and contemplate the space up close. Native plantings have been carefully selected for year-round interest. Following Thomas Rainer's ecological approach to planting design, species have been chosen based not only on their aesthetic qualities, but also for their structure and growth habits, to establish a more complete and cohesive plant community. The garden also features a number of bird houses to provide habitat for bluebirds and wrens.

WAMPUM LEARNING LODGE

architects Tillmann Ruth Robinson; Tawaw Architecture Collective; Arthur Lierman Landscape Architecture







CIVIC DESIGN PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

Overview

Drawing inspiration from the Anishnawbe concept, ‘All Our Relations’ – a teaching that reminds human beings that we are interconnected with and interdependent on both each other and all of nature – Western University has repurposed space at Althouse College to create a touchstone for Indigenous peoples and communities to engage with Western. Advancing Indigenization, decolonization, and reconciliation, the project’s goal is to foster a true sense of community and diversity. Three levels of indoor space were renovated to include an open concept gathering area, a second level mezzanine, and space that accommodate teaching and learning. architects Tillmann Ruth Robinson partnered with Tawaw Architecture Collective Principal Wanda Dalla Costa to guide the process of engagement and co-design. A member of the Saddle Lake First Nation, Wanda is the first First Nations woman to achieve architectural registration in Canada.

The design of this project repurposes the highly visible and distinctive circular structure of the original Althouse College building in a way that reflects Indigenous identity while still making use of an existing architectural asset. Through stakeholder consultation, regional Indigenous architectural precedents were identified and reflected in a contemporary and expressive way. Understanding the importance of connecting Indigenous architecture with the outdoors, new exterior landscapes weave together outdoor classrooms with Medicine Gardens and a ceremonial space - the Arbour.

The Arbour is a modern interpretation of a turtle’s shell, in reference to the Indigenous name of North America, Turtle Island.

CIVIC DESIGN PROJECTS CATEGORY: HONOURABLE MENTION

BYRON POOL AND BATHHOUSE

architects Tillmann Ruth Robinson







CIVIC DESIGN PROJECTS

ABSTRACT

Overview

The City of London plays an active and important role in the development and promotion of community-based projects that “assure the health, safety and well-being of individuals and families while promoting liveable and inclusive neighbourhoods” as identified in the Council Strategic Priority – Community Vitality. Contributing to this City initiative is the refreshed Byron Pool, a bathing facility offering local residents a new way to be active, engaged and connected in their community.

The Byron Pool and Bathhouse Life Cycle Renewal Project serves to rejuvenate the facility as a whole. Existing components were replaced by a new bathhouse, a 25M pool with diving platform, a pool deck with leisure activities and a modernized mechanical system. The configuration of the pool integrates inclusive design elements - such as accessible change/shower rooms and a beach entry to the pool– to create a safe, welcoming and family-friendly facility. Elements such as a kids’ zone with water features, a rock-climbing wall, and a diving well add fresh ways to engage the community.

The project is also designed to reflect the new Ontario Building Code as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code. Both support the removal of arbitrary barriers that prevent the right to gender identity and gender expression from enjoying protection that is equal to the protection afforded for others. The configuration of private change rooms, washrooms and other program areas, are arranged to provide clear views and paths of travel to eliminate unsafe areas and provide barrier-free accessible paths of travel throughout.

URBAN FRAGMENTS

Elements which can be defined as a stand-alone object, landscape element or building element which contributes significantly to the quality of the public realm. It should provide a memorable image, reinforce the human scale and enhance the character of the surrounding area.

Examples are:

- Street furniture
- Public art
- Walkways
- Light fixtures
- Fences
- Gateways
- Memorials

URBAN FRAGMENTS CATEGORY: HONOURABLE MENTION

HYDE PARK ROAD MEMORIAL

Arthur Lierman Landscape Architecture; Youth Coalition Combatting Islamophobia (YCCI) together with local Londoner Artist Wajeha Chams







URBAN FRAGMENTS

ABSTRACT

Overview

A Memorial was erected by the City of London at the site of the tragic murder in honour of the Afzaal family, Our London Family. Located at the southwest corner of Hyde Park and South Carriage roads and for the one-year anniversary, the purpose of the memorial is to allow individuals to gather and reflect and be a reminder that more needs to be done to battle racism and Islamophobia.

The site's small size and sight-line triangle restrictions on city-owned property posed several challenges to overcome with imaginative innovation to create a memorial deserving of dignity and distinction. Fortunately, an agreement with the adjacent developer was arranged to acquire additional space to allow for more design possibilities.

A wedge-shaped memorial gracefully rises and falls in a diptych formation that is bent to reference the nearby neighbourhood and serves as a strong background with an uplifting and spirited profile. Random vertical grooves as well as a water rill along the top to capture rainfall are etched in the memorial to texturize and add meaning. A mural, by children and friends guided by an artist, is the centrepiece complete with a variety of symbolism to honour the Afzaal family and representing community-building, hope, peace, and healing.

The plaza features a hexagon paver surface that references the common usage of the shape in Islamic art to represent infinity and harmony through symmetry. The paving pattern incorporates four shooting star bands to reflect the lives lost in the attack and point northeast to align with Muslim prayer and Mecca. A gravel bed along the base of the memorial provides a place for flowers and messages to be left behind while an oversized organic-shaped seat offers the opportunity to sit and reflect with family and friends.

Threads of purple and green colours are apparent through the composition as purple was Yumna Afzaal's favourite colour and green is intended to be a symbolic push back against Islamophobia. The planting design carries this through with a backdrop of spring flowering Serviceberry trees and blocks of Concorde Barberry and Potentilla 'Abbotswood' with four Peonies interspersed with tulips. The instructed colour theme is echoed in the painted pedestrian crossings that mark the intersection.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

The People's Choice Award gave the public the chance to vote for their favourite 2023 London Urban Design Awards nominee. All submissions for the Urban Architecture, Urban Design Plans, Urban Fragments and Civic Design Projects categories were eligible to win.

All submissions were listed on the City of London 2023 Urban Design Awards webpage, following the close of the Call for Entries. Notice for voting was advertised to the general public and all entrants.

The nominee with the most votes received the "People's Choice Award" at the 2023 Urban Design Awards.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD WINNER

MATTHEWS HALL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

a+LiNK Architecture Inc.; York Urbanist







PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

ABSTRACT

Overview

DIFFERENT. BETTER. SPECIAL.

Beginning in 2018, a+LiNK Architecture was tasked by Matthews Hall to develop a long-term master plan for their private school campus. Visioning included for phased renovations and additions which would provide inclusive, inspiring and supportive spaces for student learning and faculty engagement.

Leaning on the Matthews Hall tenets of Different, Better, Special, the Phase I work, completed in 2020, incorporated an 18,000 sq.ft. addition, including; homerooms, special breakout spaces, support areas, staff offices, washrooms and a large south facing atrium which opens to the exterior. This addition sets up the future main entrance to campus, where the student drop-off is now focused into the newly formulated courtyard. The homeroom wing embraces this courtyard and large windows frame views towards the exterior amenities. A meandering central corridor organizes the homerooms, and provides areas of wonder, spaces of compression and daylight connection. Matthews Hall offers a unique and evolving curriculum, therefore it was paramount that the design provides the flexibility, whimsy and special moments for the students to claim as their own spaces.

In 2022, Phase II was completed. This was a 7,000 sq.ft. interior & exterior renovation of the existing school including; staff administration, a revitalized early years centre with preschool and kindergarten classrooms, main office and meeting spaces. Along with the interior renovation, the Oxford Street facade was redesigned to unify with the Phase I addition, to add larger canopies for shelter, and included for a new early years playground. Continuing the narrative from Phase I, the design aimed to enhance the student experience.