

# Urban Design Challenge 2020

Student Ideas Competition for Canada's Capital

## 1.0 OVERVIEW

### Introduction

Urban Design Challenge 2020 is a competition that invites students from across the country to come up with design concepts for important sites in Canada's Capital Region. The competition is organized by the National Capital Commission (NCC), the federal Crown corporation dedicated to ensuring that Canada's Capital is a dynamic and inspiring source of pride for all Canadians, and building a legacy for generations to come.

### Challenge

The NCC is challenging students to propose innovative planning and design ideas for two important destinations in the Capital Region.

- SITE 1: The Sussex Courtyards (Ottawa, Ontario)
- OR
- SITE 2: The Gatineau Park Visitor Centre (Chelsea, Quebec)

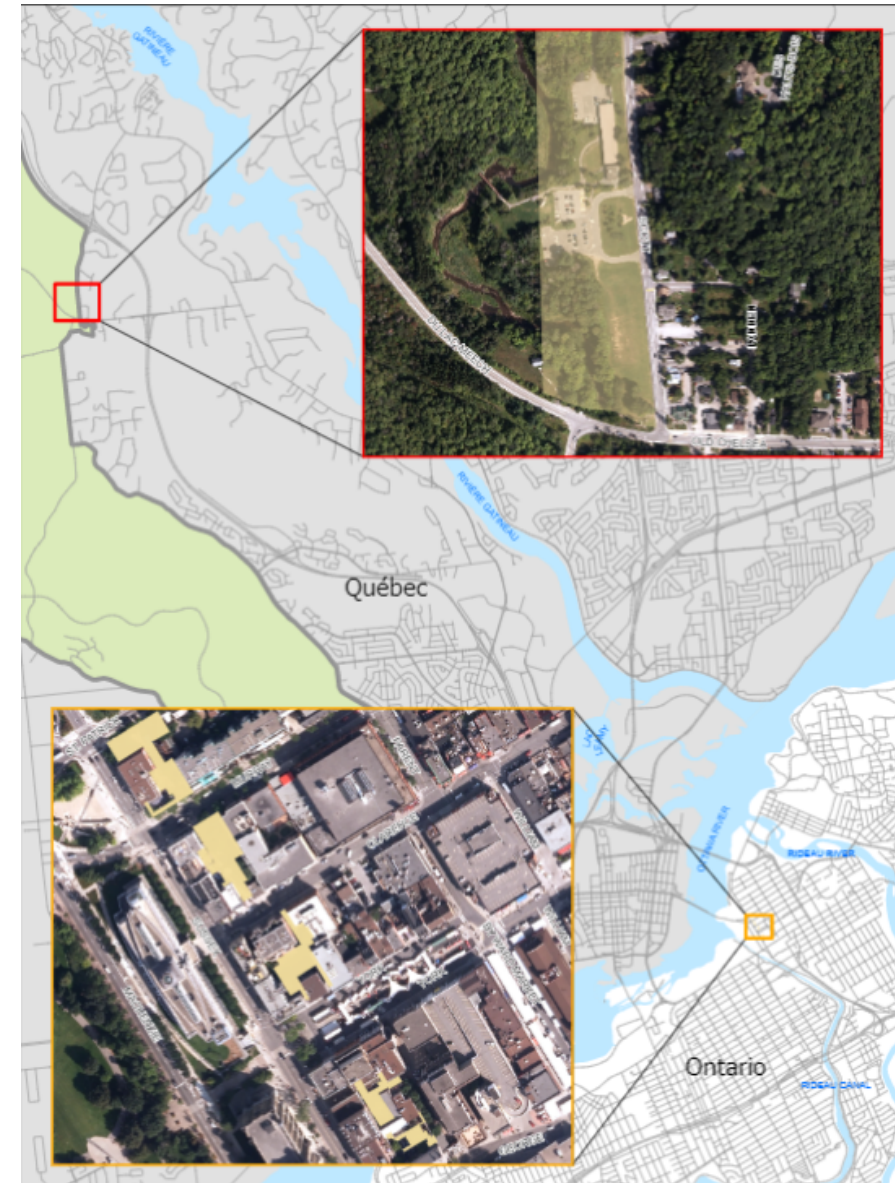
Participants in the Urban Design Challenge are required to focus their ideas on **one** of the two sites.

See section 4.0 of this competition brief for additional information about the two subject sites.

### Jury and Evaluation Criteria

A jury of interdisciplinary planning, design and site management professionals will review the submissions and select competition winners. A winning submission will provide bold design concepts that consider the following:

- site context
- leading sustainability elements
- environmental and ecological features
- public access
- four-season use
- tourism and recreational opportunities
- current master plans and policies.



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## Schedule

<b>Week of December 2, 2020</b>	Competition launches
<b>Dec 12</b>	Registration start
<b>February 14, 2020</b>	Last day for registration
<b>February 28, 2020</b>	Last day to send questions
<b>March 23, 2020</b>	Submissions due
<b>March 30–April 1, 2020</b>	Jury consideration
<b>April 3, 2020</b>	Winners announced
<b>April 8</b>	Deadline for acceptance
<b>April 30, 2020</b>	Awards presentation

## Awards

There will be one winning project for each site. The first-place award for each site is \$750. The two winning projects will be announced on April 3, 2020.

(The jury may determine runners-up and honourable mention awards as well. There are no monetary prizes associated with these awards.)

The winning teams will be invited to present their ideas at a special awards presentation session of the NCC's Urbanism Lab on April 30, 2020. Travel and accommodation expenses for the two winning teams will be covered (*see details in next section*).

## 2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Eligibility

The competition is open to any students who are currently enrolled in a design-focused program at an accredited educational institution in Canada. The maximum number of participants per team is three.

The NCC encourages students to form interdisciplinary teams. Proposals should consider aspects of urban planning, site design, architecture and landscape design. A diverse team of complementary skills is likely to result in a more successful submission.

## Registration

There is no registration fee to participate in the Urban Design Challenge. However, participants are required to register and to receive a team number in order to ensure that the submissions remain anonymous throughout the evaluation process. One registration is required per project submitted.

Participants may register on the competition website: [ncc-ccn.gc.ca/2020-challenge](http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/2020-challenge). By registering, participants agree to all competition terms and conditions. Registration will remain open until February 14, 2020.

## Questions

Questions regarding the competition will be accepted until February 28, 2020. Questions should be emailed to: [stanley.leinwand@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:stanley.leinwand@ncc-ccn.ca) or [gregory.kerr@ncc-ccn.ca](mailto:gregory.kerr@ncc-ccn.ca). All emails sent should include "Student Competition 2020" in the subject line. Answers to all questions will be posted on the competition website: [ncc-ccn.gc.ca/2020-challenge](http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/2020-challenge).

## Submissions

Submissions may be prepared in either of Canada's two official languages (English and French). Competition submissions are due **no later than 11:59 pm Daylight Saving Time on March 23, 2020**. All submissions will be made via the NCC's FTP site; further details will be provided to participants after registration. No hard copies of materials will be accepted.

The Urban Design Challenge is an anonymous competition. **No names or identifying symbols of participants shall appear on submitted material or in filenames.**

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Submissions should consist of the following elements:

- 1) Up to two 60.96-cm x 91.44-cm (24-in. x 36-in.) boards in PDF format. The filenames should include the registration number (e.g. "Board\_12345"). All drawings and architectural scales should be expressed in metric.
- 2) A written statement not exceeding 500 words explaining the ideas. The file should be in .txt or Word format. The filename should include the registration number (e.g. "Written\_12345").
- 3) A document with contact information for the participating individual/team. The document should include the project title, participant name(s) and email address for primary contact. The filename should include the registration number (e.g. "ID\_12345"). The sources of any third-party material incorporated in the entry must also be included.

### Ownership and Copyright

Each participant shall retain ownership of the copyright associated with the entries submitted.

By submitting an entry, each participant grants the NCC a non-exclusive perpetual licence to use, reproduce, publish, modify, incorporate into other work, distribute and promote, in whole or in part, the materials submitted by the participant for any non-commercial or commercial purpose, in any format whatsoever, including print, digital publication, audio, video and all other media (whether now known or later developed), in any form, without territorial limits and without attribution.

### Warranties

By submitting an entry, participants warrant that their entry is original. See the design contest rules and regulations for further information.

## 3.0 CONTEXT

### Role of the NCC

The NCC is the federal Crown corporation dedicated to ensuring that Canada's Capital is a dynamic and inspiring source of pride for all Canadians, and a legacy for generations to come. The NCC is responsible for the long-term planning of the national capital, and is the approval authority for federal lands and buildings. In addition to its planning and approval roles, the NCC is also the steward and manager of many important properties throughout the Capital, including historic buildings and places, public spaces, parks, squares, parkways, shorelines and green spaces.



### Capital planning

At the apex of the Capital Planning Framework stands the Plan for Canada's Capital, 2017–2067. This plan lays out a blueprint for the evolution of federal lands in Canada's Capital Region over a 50-year horizon; it is the NCC's pre-eminent planning document.

The Capital Planning Framework also includes sector plans, which further refine the themes, goals, policies and strategies for particular geographic areas. Canada's Capital Core Area Sector Plan guides decision making and informs future planning initiatives for the heart of the National Capital Region, and the Gatineau Park Master Plan guides the planning, management and activities permitted with the boundaries of Gatineau Park.



### 4.0 STUDY AREAS

#### Site 1: Sussex Courtyards



The Sussex Courtyards are important public spaces within the historic ByWard Market area in downtown Ottawa. With a street grid laid out by Colonel John By in the 1820s, the ByWard Market has some of the city's oldest buildings. Today, the ByWard Market is a vibrant mix of commercial and residential properties. The courtyards were formerly the stables and backyards of the historic buildings on Sussex Drive. In the 1960s, the NCC began acquiring the historic buildings along Sussex, restoring and, in some cases, reconstructing them in what was called the "Mile of History" project. Over the next several decades, the courtyards were carefully transformed through both restoration and sensitive new infill development into a series of five pedestrian spaces, each with their own unique ambiance:

- Clarendon Court
- York Court
- Jeanne d'Arc Court
- Tin House Court
- Beaux-Arts Court

The Sussex Courtyards have become an iconic part of the ByWard Market's diversity and character. In addition to the surrounding market, the courtyards are within a short walk of national landmarks such as the National Gallery of Canada, Major's Hill Park, Nepean Point and the Ottawa River. In 2004, the NCC developed design guidelines for the Sussex Courtyards to help support and enhance their special character. The City of Ottawa is currently developing a ByWard Market Public Realm Plan, which will guide the revitalization of the surrounding areas.



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The NCC is seeking new ideas to animate and enhance the Sussex Courtyards. Over the coming years, the NCC will seek to renew and revitalize these unique urban spaces. Adjacent businesses rely on the courtyards for summer patios and foot traffic to shops and restaurants. Investments must contribute to the economic vitality of the local businesses and should create new opportunities to fill vacant properties and draw potential customers. Inside/outside strategies may lead to innovative business opportunities and an extended operating season. Improved wayfinding, visibility and connectivity to the surroundings will be crucial to ensuring the continued success and charm of the courtyards. Many opportunities exist to improve the nighttime ambiance, and should respect the NCC's broader Capital Illumination Plan. Programming, animation and design features should be explored to reinforce and enhance the mixed-use character of the neighbourhood.



### THE CHALLENGE: What should be done to stimulate and revitalize the Sussex Courtyards?

#### PROPOSALS SHOULD

- Support and enhance the unique heritage character of the area
- Improve connections, visibility and relationship to the surrounding urban context of the ByWard Market
- Create new public and commercial amenities that will animate the site, year-round, both during the daytime and into the evenings
- Respect the diverse mixed-use residential neighbourhood of the ByWard Market
- Attract a critical mass of potential customers, and generate economic returns
- Improve the safety, accessibility, maintenance and operating conditions of the courtyards.

Please consult the section *5.0 Resources and References* at the end of this document for a number of relevant resources, plans and background studies that are available for reference.



### Site 2: Gatineau Park Visitor Centre



Gatineau Park is a 361-square-kilometre conservation park, stretching roughly 50 kilometres northwest from downtown Ottawa. The park is a valuable ecological and recreational resource that receives 2.6 million visits made by tourists and local residents each year. The Visitor Centre is the primary arrival and information point for park visitors, as well as the administrative and operational hub for NCC staff. It is located at 33 Scott Road in the village of Old Chelsea, Quebec, 16 kilometres north of downtown Ottawa. The current visitor centre is at the end of its life cycle. The building was converted from an old administrative/garage facility in the late 1990s, and the building systems are inefficient and costly to operate. Some portions of the site are contaminated from prior uses. In addition to these issues, the vast number of visitors each year contribute to traffic congestion in the village and throughout the park.

Over the coming years, the NCC will build a new visitor centre to improve the visitor experience, and resolve transportation and operational challenges. The new visitor centre will serve as a year-round facility, and must facilitate access to park services and resources, while enabling sustainable transportation solutions. It is assumed that future public transit will be extended to the



Visitor Centre from downtown Ottawa, and opportunities should be explored to reduce motor vehicle traffic and promote active transportation. The site should accommodate visitors arriving by car and provide a jumping-off point to explore the park by foot, bike, ski or other sustainable modes of transportation. The site program must include a new 2,000-square-metre building capable of accommodating visitor reception and information, nature and cultural exhibits, meeting rooms, staff offices, and park operational needs. Part of the building program may include an Indigenous centre, and approximately 150 square metres should be reserved for such a use. The building must respond

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to the unique natural setting, and should conserve and enhance the natural topography and vegetation, where possible. It is assumed that the new building will be serviced with municipal water and sewer connections. The building must demonstrate excellence in eco-design principles, and should lead by example by targeting net-zero construction and operating standards. The site must also include multi-purpose outdoor gathering spaces for cultural and programming needs.



### **THE CHALLENGE: How can a new Gatineau Park Visitor Centre better accommodate and serve park users?**

#### PROPOSALS SHOULD

- Create a new iconic landmark building at the entrance to Gatineau Park that showcases the NCC's commitment to environmental sustainability, Indigenous reconciliation and design excellence
- Provide enhanced visitor reception services, and support sustainable transportation options to recreational facilities throughout the park
- Respect the surrounding natural ecology and meet best practices for environmentally sustainable building design and construction
- Contribute to the reduction of traffic congestion at the intersection of Old Chelsea, Scott and Kingsmere
- Reserve a space for an Indigenous cultural centre that showcases Indigenous design, and includes meeting, exhibit and retail space

Please consult the section *5.0 Resources and References* at the end of this document for a number of relevant resources, plans and background studies that are available for reference.

## 5.0 RESOURCES and REFERENCES

### General

National Capital Commission. *The Plan for Canada's Capital, 2017–2067*.

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/our-plans/the-plan-for-canadas-capital>

National Capital Commission. *Sustainable Development Strategy, 2018–2023*.

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/our-plans/sustainable-development-strategy>

### Site 1: Sussex Courtyards

National Capital Commission website

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/projects/sussex-courtyards>

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/blog/a-legacy-to-build-on>

National Capital Commission. *Canada's Capital Core Area Sector Plan*.

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/our-plans/canadas-capital-core-area-sector-plan>

National Capital Commission. *Capital Illumination Plan, 2017–2027*.

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/our-plans/capital-illumination-plan>

City of Ottawa: GeoOttawa mapping tool.

<http://maps.ottawa.ca/geoottawa/>

City of Ottawa. *Official Plan* .

<https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/official-plan-and-master-plans/official-plan>

City of Ottawa. *Zoning By-law No. 2008-250*.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/laws-licences-and-permits/laws/law-z/planning-development-and-construction/maps-and-zoning/zoning-law-no-2008-250>

City of Ottawa. *Pedestrian Plan*.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/planning-development-and-construction/official-plan-and-master-plans#ottawa-pedestrian-plan>

City of Ottawa. *ByWard Market Public Realm Plan*.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/public-engagement/projects/byward-market-public-realm-plan>

Parks Canada website, Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO)

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/culture/beefp-fhbro>

Documentation Repository:

- Project for Public Spaces for the City of Ottawa. *Strengthening the Future of the ByWard Market*. . In English only.
- Commonwealth Resource Management for the National Capital Commission. *Cultural Heritage Impact Statement for the Proposed Redevelopment of 7 Clarence Street, ByWard Market, Ottawa, Ontario*, February 2014. In English only.
- Michael Newton, NCC historian. *Lowertown Ottawa*, Volume 1 (1826–1854) and Volume 2 (1894–1900). In English only.
- Heritage Dossier: Sussex Courtyards, Spring 2018. In English only.
- du Toit Allsopp Hillier. *Sussex Heritage Courtyards Urban Design Study* , February 2004. In English only.

### Site 2: Gatineau Park Visitor Centre

National Capital Commission website: Gatineau Park

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/gatineau-park>

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places/gatineau-park-visitor-information>

National Capital Commission. *Gatineau Park Master Plan*, 2005.

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/our-plans/gatineau-park-master-plan>

Municipality of Chelsea. *Special Planning Program and Concordance By-laws*, November 2011. English version of the document provided as a courtesy. In the event of a discrepancy, the French text will prevail.

<https://www.chelsea.ca/application/files/2115/5682/7902/8 - 635-05 appendix 5 anglais.pdf>

Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation du Québec. *Schéma d'aménagement et de développement d'une municipalité régionale de comté (MRC)*. In French only.

[www.mamh.gouv.qc.ca/amenagement-du-territoire/](http://www.mamh.gouv.qc.ca/amenagement-du-territoire/)

Documentation Repository:

- National Capital Commission. *Entrances to Gatineau Park*, November 2009 (final report).
- National Capital Commission. *Statement of Requirements, Gatineau Park Visitor Centre*.
- Bryden Martel Architect Inc., for the National Capital Commission. *Gatineau Park Visitor Centre, Functional Program and Location Considerations*, June 18, 2012. In English only.