

The Lulu Awards

RICHMOND
URBAN DESIGN
AWARDS 2026



What is Urban Design?

Urban Design is the design of a city and all its visible components. That is, how buildings and the spaces between them—open spaces and parks, bridges and streets, sidewalks and walkways, bodies of water, trees and landscaping, lighting and signage, etc. are all designed together over time to create an attractive, memorable and safe city.

What are the Lulu Awards?

The Urban Design Awards Program, The Lulu Awards, is intended to recognize, celebrate and inspire excellence in urban design in the City of Richmond. Design awards will be granted for exceptional projects that represent visionary thinking and “raise the bar” for design excellence in Richmond.

Eligibility

Private and public sector projects are eligible for an urban design award if they are approved and completed up to five years prior to the awards year. Submissions for awards can be submitted by a project owner, a member of the team that is associated with the project, City of Richmond staff, or a member of the general public. To be eligible for an award, submissions must be received by the City of Richmond before the deadline date and all entries must meet submission requirements. All Richmond public projects, including those developed by the City of Richmond, are eligible for awards.

Submission Requirements

Submissions will only be accepted if they include the following requirements:

- A completed Richmond Urban Design Awards official entry form in digital Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.
- A brief abstract of the project to explain its design qualities and how this project significantly adds to the quality of the public realm in Richmond. The abstract should also touch on those items that are outlined in the relevant award category descriptions. The abstract must be provided in digital Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.
- Two display boards, 24"x 36" maximum, illustrating the design qualities of the project described in the abstract and identifying the project name and address. A digital copy of the same must be provided in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.
- A photo slide show, not exceeding 25 photographs, illustrating the design qualities of the project described in the abstract. The slide show must be provided in digital Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.

All materials submitted will become property of the City of Richmond and will not be returned to the applicant. Furthermore, submission of materials implies consent for the City of Richmond to disseminate such materials at its sole discretion such as:

- Posting on the City's website
- Posting on social media
- At the awards ceremony and as press information related to the awards

Awards Process

The call for submissions will commence January 2026. The Lulu Awards will occur every four years. The City's Development Applications Department will raise awareness in the community. This may include use of the City's website, social media, newspaper advertising and mail-outs to members of the design, architecture, landscape architecture, planning, and development industries.

Judging Process

The judges will review submissions in all categories and rate each project based on criteria put forth in the award categories descriptions. Based on this evaluation, the judges will compile a short list of projects that provide examples of urban design excellence. The Development Applications Department will arrange for the judges to visit the sites of the projects on the short list. Thereafter, the judges will reconvene, in a closed meeting, to make their awards recommendations and will submit them in a closed meeting, to City Council for final approval.

It is at the sole discretion of the City Council to determine whether or not awards will be recommended in any or all of the awards categories in a given year.

Honourable mention may be given to those projects that did not win an award but exhibited many excellent design traits worthy of recognition.



Awards Promotion

The City will provide information relating to the award winning projects through news releases, the City website, social media, advertising and other publications relating to the next Lulu Awards program.

Awards Presentation

The Lulu Awards will be presented to the winners at a City Council ceremony in October 2026. Any projects earning honourable mention will also be congratulated at this ceremony. A maximum of two awards can be given to each award winning team.

The Lulu Awards Jury

The Lulu Awards jury, will be established by the City Council and will include:

Voting Members:

1. An Architect
2. A Landscape Architect
3. A Planner/Urban Designer
4. The General Manager, Planning and Development
5. The Director of Development

Limitations:

- Members of the jury will serve for no more than three (3) consecutive Design Award terms, except for (4) and (5) above.
- No member of the jury will vote on any projects under consideration that they are related to in any substantive way.
- The jury will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from (1), (2) and (3) above at its first meeting for each Design Award term.

Designates:

Designates from any of the above groups will be accepted by the City where jurors disqualify themselves from serving on the jury, where a jury member has already served three (3) consecutive Awards terms, or where the above-identified person cannot make himself/herself available for serving on the jury.

Program Support:

Development Applications staff will administer the program with the assistance of Corporate Communications staff.



Award Categories and their Criteria

Buildings

1. Residential (single-family, coach house or duplex, including innovative renovations)
2. Residential (townhouse)
3. Residential and Mixed-Use (mid rise)
4. Residential and Mixed-Use (high rise)
5. Commercial
6. Industrial
7. Public and Institutional Buildings

Criteria for Categories 1 to 7 include:

- Contribution to the quality of place
- Relationship to public realm (adjacent buildings, structures, roads, open spaces, natural features)
- Providing a memorable image, reinforcing the human scale and enhancing the character of the surrounding area
- Architectural excellence
- Integrated approach to design
- Demonstration of fulfilling a clearly articulated urban design intent
- Pedestrian amenity
- Sustainability

Open Space

8. Public and Institutional Open Space
9. Landscape innovation
10. Ecological Design and Innovation
11. Universal Design and Innovation

Criteria for Categories 8 and 9 include:

- Contribution to the quality of place
- Relationship to public realm (adjacent buildings, structures, roads, open spaces, natural features)
- Providing a memorable image, reinforcing the human scale and enhancing the character of the surrounding area
- Landscape design excellence, which may include open space, landscape elements, or small-scale pieces of buildings which contribute to the quality of the public realm
- Providing a memorable image, reinforce the human scale and enhance the character of the surrounding area
- An open space should relate to and be defined by adjacent buildings or natural or manmade elements which provide an extension to the public realm in an exemplary way.
- Innovation, including measures taken to ensure survival of trees that are retained or relocated on-site.
- Sustainability



Criteria for Category 10 include:

- Provides thoughtful attention to the site's larger context-ecology and hydrology to balance the built environment with the natural environment.
- Advances landscape design that protects, restores and regenerates natural systems, reduces water consumption, preserves water quality, prevents soil erosion, while providing enjoyable and learning environments for people.
- Promotes rewilding and creates a diverse habitat for birds, insects and pollinators that contribute towards more resilient ecosystems.
- Incorporates creative strategies to deal with invasive species.
- Promotes landscape design that increases the capacity of carbon sinks through revegetation.
- Incorporates innovative use of native plant material and/or plants that are regionally adaptive to our climate thus demonstrating a response to climate change.
- Develops innovative tree planting design that overcome urban challenges, thereby reducing the effects of the urban heat island effect and mitigating the effects of heavy rain events.
- Landscape design that fosters environmental stewardship and create healthy ecosystems that uphold the quality of life for present and future generations

Criteria for Category 11 include:

- Space is accessible and welcoming to everyone and incorporates design that provides barrier-free access for all forms of disability (physical, sensory, cognitive, mental health).
- Reflects the principles of universal design and is consistent with the City of Richmond's Enhanced Accessibility Design Guidelines and Technical Specifications.
- Advances a level of accessibility that goes beyond the BC Building Code requirements.
- Provides innovative solutions to removing typical barriers for persons with disabilities in the built environment.
- Promotes social inclusion through design that reflects the diversity of Richmond's community.
- Promotes a stronger relationship to the public realm, including accessible design features to ensure safe transitions from open spaces to public realm (e.g., roads, parking lots and sidewalks).

These categories are intended to:

- Explain what types of projects are eligible for the Lulu Awards
- Describe, in very general terms, how these projects will be evaluated
- Help to encourage submissions that are of a very high quality
- *Describe the use, rather than ownership, of projects*

These categories are not intended to:

- Limit the number of awards that can be granted within a single category.
- Require that an award be granted in every category where there is not a submission that warrants an award.
- Limit a submission to competing only against those projects that are within their category.



Important Dates for the Lulu Awards

Call for Submissions:

January 2026

Submission Deadline:

March 31, 2026

Awards Presentation:

October 2026

Submission Requirements

Submissions will only be accepted if they include the following requirements:

- A completed Richmond Urban Design Awards official entry form in digital Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.
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Submissions must be received by the City's Development Applications Department before Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 5:00pm

Submissions can be mailed or couriered to the following address:

City of Richmond Lulu Awards
c/o Development Applications
6911 No. 3 Road,
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

For more information contact:

Dr. Virendra Kallianpur
Program Manager, Urban Design
Tel: 604-247-4620
richmond.ca



Project Name

Project Address/Location

Completion Date

Category

Buildings

Open space

Architect/Designer

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Telephone No.

Owner/Developer

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Telephone No.

Contractor

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Telephone No.

Entry Submitted by

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Telephone

Date of Submission

*Submissions must be received by the City's Development Applications
Department before Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 5:00pm*

