

The 2019



First Prize: **\$5,000**

Register for **FREE**:

Now – September 27, 2018

[www.PhiladelphiaCFA.org](http://www.PhiladelphiaCFA.org)

Competition Dates:

Sept. 28 – Oct 26, 2018

Submission Deadline:

October 26, 2018

Entry Fee (per entry @ submission):

**\$25** | student team

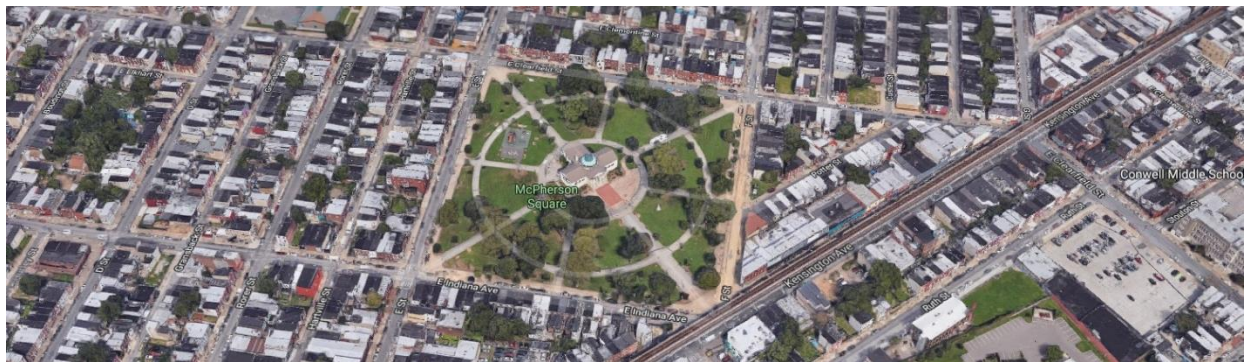
Awards Ceremony:

February 2019 (tentative)

Competition Partners:



## Re-imagining the Heart of Kensington



Philadelphia has been hit particularly hard by the opioid drug epidemic, causing entire neighborhoods to suffer its side-effects: public spaces made unsafe for residents and children due to used needle litter, drug-related violence, and abandoned properties. The Kensington neighborhood in North Philadelphia has become a somewhat famous destination for “drug tourists” seeking opioids. This brings people who are suffering addiction from as far away as Florida and Oregon, saddling the community with semi-permanent and transient residents who have no permanent homes.

McPherson Square is one of the anchors of the Kensington neighborhood. It is the site of community festivals, neighborhood cleanups, and a very active library. It is also a space where local Community Development Corporations, residents, civic institutions, city agencies, and service providers rally their resources. A two-year process led by the city and community groups to help those living with addiction access treatment and obtain more stable housing has had some success. Local business owners, police, and residents of this neighborhood have taught themselves how to administer Narcan, an anti-narcotic that can reverse the effects of an overdose, and many carry it with them regularly - in doing so they have collectively saved the lives of dozens of their outdoor neighbors. These situations understandably cause stress for the community and pose significant challenges for long-time residents.

How can the design of public space in the neighborhood around McPherson Square, from sidewalks and streets to landscaping and street furniture, help address the effects of the opioid epidemic, make the community safer, and improve quality of life for those in the neighborhood? We’re specifically looking for design solutions that address the needs of longtime stakeholders in this neighborhood (homeowners and renters, local businesses, schools, libraries, and other community organizations) by helping to build resiliency in the community through stronger connections, social cohesion, and an improved public realm. We don’t expect that design will solve the opioid epidemic - nor do we expect you to become public health experts. We do believe that high quality urban design can help improve on-the-ground conditions for this community, especially when coupled with the public health initiatives and other social services that are already working in the neighborhood.

**Registration is FREE and open to all!** Registration does not obligate you to participate – the process simply ensures that you receive all competition-related materials as they are made public. You will receive helpful resources and, on September 28<sup>th</sup>, the Official Competition Packet (with full rules and regulations). The competition is open to all college or university students (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) who are actively matriculating during the run of the competition (Sept 28–Oct 26, 2018). As you develop your ideas, consider:

### **Children + Families**

How can your designs make this neighborhood a more fun and safe experience for the children who live, learn, and play here? Kensington has the most children per-capita among Philadelphia's neighborhoods, meaning your designs here can influence the largest number of our city's young citizens at once.

### **Streets as Public Spaces**

How can Kensington's streets and sidewalks be redesigned to turn them into public spaces as valuable (and fun!) as the official neighborhood parks? Can your designs encourage and empower residents to spend time together socially on the streets? In the process, can the design also improve both perceived and actual safety for residents? How can improved street furniture add value to these public spaces?

### **Trauma-Informed Design**

"Trauma-informed" refers to the fact that the choices people make today are strongly influenced by their desire to reduce stress caused by trauma earlier in their lives. How can your designs be informed by this concept to help the neighborhood reduce stress among its residents and allow them to feel safer? Consider concepts such as the ability to quickly assess access/exit routes when walking down the street or how the right lighting can make a section of sidewalk feel more welcoming.

### **Existing Programs + Infrastructure**

Many city agencies and community groups have already invested a lot of time, energy, and resources into addressing the opioid epidemic in Kensington and its impact on the community. Be sure to thoroughly research the resources below to understand what programs and projects are already underway in this community so that your team can build upon work that's already being done. We are not looking for teams to propose new social programs or housing solutions for those suffering from addiction.

## **RESEARCH RESOURCES**

**Neighborhood Data** | [2019 Competition Site](#) | [Kensington 2022 Neighborhood Plan by IMPACT](#) | [Kensington Playstreets Map](#) | [MaKen Development by SHIFT](#)  
**Opioid Crisis + Health Data** | [Kensington Counts Homeless Initiative](#) | [PHL Health of the City Report](#) | [PHL Office of Homeless Services Opioid Crisis Plan](#) | [PHMC Opioid Crisis Response](#) | [More Green. Less Crime](#)  
**Planning Resources** | [PHL Complete Streets Handbook](#) | [PHL Playstreets Initiative](#) | [National Street Service](#) | [Urban Thinkscape Project](#) | [NATCO Design Guides](#) | [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#)

**We STRONGLY encourage proposals from diverse teams** which include individuals from a variety of fields: architecture, urban planning, design (industrial, graphic, etc.), landscape architecture, public health, economic development, environmental science, real estate law, business, or other fields which might bring innovative ideas to your proposal. Proposals from diverse teams have historically done best in this competition.

For more information on the Better Philadelphia Challenge, including summaries of past competitions and images of winning entries, please visit: [www.PhiladelphiaCFA.org](http://www.PhiladelphiaCFA.org). **Information in this brief in preliminary and details may change when the Official Competition Packet released in late September.**

### **About the Better Philadelphia Challenge**

Founded in 2006 in memory of Philadelphia's iconic 20<sup>th</sup> century city planner, Ed Bacon [1910-2005], this annual competition challenges university-level students (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) from around the world to address real-world urban design issues in Philadelphia that have application not only to our city, but to urban centers around the globe. This challenge is organized by the Ed Bacon Memorial Committee of the Center for Architecture and Design.

### **About the Center for Architecture and Design**

The Center provides Philadelphia with educational programs, exhibitions, and a public space to explore architecture, urban planning, and design, allowing visitors the opportunity to understand how these disciplines affect us all in our daily lives. Using our city's distinctive breadth of architecture, pioneering urban design, and manufacturing heritage as the foundation for conversation, we educate the public through talks, exhibitions, publications, hands-on workshops, design competitions, festivals, and children's programming. The Center also serves as the physical home for AIA Philadelphia and the Community Design Collaborative.

### **About the Edmund N. Bacon Prize**

Bestowed annually upon an accomplished figure who, like its namesake, has made outstanding contributions to urban planning, development, and design through conviction of vision, effective communication, and commitment to improving their community. This prize is presented at the same awards ceremony which honors the Better Philadelphia Challenge winners and features a keynote address by its recipient.

### **About Edmund N. Bacon**

Philadelphia's most iconic city planner, Ed Bacon [1910-2005] was Executive Director of Philadelphia's City Planning Commission from 1949-1970 and is the only city planner to ever grace the cover of Time Magazine. His impact on Philadelphia's urban environment began with his epic 1947 *A Better Philadelphia* exhibition, which drew nearly 400,000 people over five weeks to its visionary displays covering two floors of Gimbel's Department Store.