2021 Edmund N. Bacon Urban Design Awards

Student Design Competition

***Disclaimer: This is a student competition for ideas ONLY and is not affiliated in any way with the development of the site.***

$25 | per entry at the time of submission
$5,000 | First Prize Award
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IMPORTANT DATES

October 30, 2020: Deadline for questions
November 20, 2020: Final date to submit entries
February 2021 (date TBD): Awards Ceremony in Philadelphia
Founded in 2006 in memory of Philadelphia’s iconic 20th century city planner, Edmund N. Bacon [1910-2005], this annual program honors both professionals and students whose work epitomize excellence in urban design. Each year, a professional who has made significant contributions to the field of urban planning is selected to receive our Edmund N. Bacon Award. In addition, the winners of an international student urban design competition, envisioning a better Philadelphia, are honored with our Edmund N. Bacon Student Awards. The combined awards ceremony is hosted in Philadelphia each February.
The 1300-acre Philadelphia Energy Solutions (PES) Refinery along the Schuylkill River in southwest Philadelphia will close. An explosion in June of 2019 was only the last in a series of setbacks for the troubled energy company, which filed for bankruptcy in January 2018, but its bankruptcy plan was approved in March of that year, but the refinery closed at the end of August 2019, idling over 1000 workers, though most have still been employed in the cleanup of the site following the accident. The facility was in operation for over 130 years and produced 335,000 barrels per day (bpd). In February 2020, the property went under an Agreement of sale with Hilco, a developer of multi-use light industrial facilities. As of the publication of this brief, the deal has yet to close, although it is expected to. Hilco’s plans for the site are still unknown, though the company has not ruled out the continuation of refinery-related business, given the existing infrastructure still in place. Before the sale, a proposal was already in place to create a $120 million renewable energy complex on the site.

As an example and to give more context to Hilco as the probable developer of this site, Hilco is a partner in an industrial project which have transformed the 3100 acre, heavily polluted Sparrows Point in Baltimore, converting it into a distribution hub, which also includes a hydroponic greenhouse and facilities supporting an offshore wind farm. The redevelopment involved remediation of numerous contaminants. By 2025, Hilco has projected reaching $2 billion in investment and creating 17,000 jobs.
The surrounding neighborhoods have been pushing to close the facility, and its leaders have been vocal in their distrust of PES and its operation over the years. The heavily polluted Southwest Philadelphia site is undergoing its own cleanup, which includes pumping subsurface petroleum for recycling. This effort will continue for many years.

As You Formulate Your Brief

Naturally, the new ownership of the large tract and its proximity to Center City Philadelphia spurred speculation about the future of the site. A planning and design competition would have to be speculative, but there is plenty of information in the press and several studies focused on the environmental problems and the economic implications of the redevelopment. It’s been suggested variously that the competition focus on the entire 1300-acre site (equivalent to Center City), which could be daunting if not overwhelming, or rather on a part or parts of the site.

Entrants should be encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams that include student architects, landscape architects, civil engineers, planners, environmental engineers, and economists, to address the myriad real-world issues facing any proposal to redevelop the site.

Some initial questions the competition might ask are:

- Assuming petroleum refining might cease or be greatly scaled back at the Hilco site very soon, and that progress can be made on remediating its contamination, what could be the future of the site in 10, 20, 50 or even 100 years?
- What are the positive attributes that could be leveraged to improve the site?
- What are the highest and best uses that could be possible?
- How might the developer and the City work with the neighborhoods and businesses in the area to resolve their needs, which are often in conflict?
- How might the new developments or uses create employment opportunities for the idled workers and for the creation of new jobs in new industries and related functions?

Questions?

All questions regarding the brief, site area, neighborhood civic organizations, etc. should be submitted to elizabeth@philadelphiacfa.org no later than October 30, 2020. Responses to questions will be posted to www.philadelphiacfa.org and announced in an email.

Be sure to sign up for our emails to be kept abreast of any announcements including the answers to all questions. The email sign up can be found on the Edmund N. Bacon Urban Design Awards Student Competition event page on the Center’s website: www.philadelphiacfa.org.
Mayor Kenney established a Refinery Advisory Group to bring together people with diverse experiences, knowledge, and perspectives on the refinery, to plan for a variety of possible outcomes.

The Refinery Advisory Group has:

- Considered how the closure of the PES facility will affect Philadelphia’s economy, environment, and public health and safety.
- Shared ideas for how the site can provide the best use and highest value, with an emphasis on options that are both economically feasible and positive for the city.
- Gathered feedback from the public and from various organizations to better inform City officials.

**Refinery Advisory Group Resources**


**Planning Resources**

- Lindy Institute: A VISION FOR THE LOWER SCHUYLKILL | City of Philadelphia: A Close Call and an Uncertain Future: An assessment of the past, present, and next steps for Philadelphia’s refinery, November 2019
Refinery News:
June 16, 2020: Company buying bankrupt PES refinery promises 18,000 jobs in next 10 years

June 3, 2020: The bankrupt Philly refinery is off the hook for millions owed in renewable fuel obligations

May 7, 2020: Planned $120M renewable-energy plant at South Philly refinery site is not dead


February 20, 2020: What happens next, now that the refinery’s future seems wide open?

Feb 17, 2020: A Breakdown of Chemical Contaminants Found at the Shuttered South Philadelphia Refinery

Feb 14, 2020: Longtime South Philly residents are hopeful after refinery sale: ‘I could dance all over the street.

February 12, 2020: After last-minute negotiations, judge picks a winner in Philadelphia refinery auction

February 9, 2020: Philly must plan for a post-refinery future | Editorial

December 15, 2019: What should happen to the South Philly refinery site? Community voices weigh in. | Opinion

November 21, 2019: Clean Air Council Launches Process for Long-Term Vision for the Lower Schuylkill’s Philadelphia Energy Solutions’ Site


July 19, 2019: Risk plan for Philly refinery shows a hydrogen fluoride release could have been disastrous. Some say the toxic chemical is too dangerous to keep using

July 11, 2019: Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery closing means great opportunities for Philadelphia | Opinion

July 5, 2019: Philadelphia refinery closing reverses two years of U.S. capacity gains

July 3, 2019: From bankruptcy to fire to closure, a rocky end for Philadelphia Energy Solutions

June 26, 2019: Philadelphia Energy Solutions to close refinery damaged by fire; gas prices spike
RESEARCH RESOURCES

June 26, 2019: Refinery Shutdown Could Mean New Life for 1,400 Waterfront Acres
June 26, 2019: Philadelphia oil refinery to close: What you need to know
June 26, 2019: Could dream of converting Philly refinery into renewable energy facility turn into reality?
June 21, 2019: South Philly refinery’s long history of fires, explosions, deaths and injuries.
September 20, 2018 | Beyond Bankruptcy: The Outlook for Philadelphia’s Neighborhood Refinery

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 awards, including summaries of past competitions and images of winning entries, please visit: www.PhiladelphiaCFA.org.

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Eligibility
The 2021 international competition is open to all college/university STUDENTS of any discipline and academic level (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) who are actively matriculating at a college or university during the fall 2020 semester (August 1 – November 20, 2020).

Entries may be submitted by individual students or by student teams of any size, so long as members of each team are all matriculating students. Teams may include students from one school or from several schools, and from any department or major, but all team members must be currently matriculating students.

Presentation Board
Entrants MUST electronically submit one (1) .PDF presentation board which measures 80” wide x 40” tall (203cm x 101.5cm), optimized for “web viewing” (smallest file size possible – you should be able to get it down to ~10MB or less). Turn OFF the “preserve layers” option when saving your final file. Boards may be designed in full color.

Your board MUST include:
- **Project Title:** Title font must be at least 1.5” (4 cm) in height (example: Arial font at 150pt)
- **Defining Image:** This image should provide an overview of your vision for the competition site. The image is meant to help people unfamiliar with your project gain a quick understanding of your design solution. Your image could be a beautiful site plan, a computer rendering, a fun sketch, a funky collage, an infographic – anything that best summarizes your vision. This image can be of the entire site, a section of the site, elements within the site, or represent abstract ideas about your solution. We want you to be creative with this image; just remember its purpose is to explain your vision succinctly. This image should be the first thing people notice about your competition board, so make sure its big enough, bold enough, and is placed conspicuously – it could even take up most of your presentation board.
- **Renderings, diagrams, maps,** and/or plans which explain how your proposal addresses:
  1. **Programming:** Most importantly, how your proposal envisions the implementation of the activities and functions that are feasible and needed immediately and in the near term (10 years or less). Also, your project should speculate as to what could be the potential of the site for future generations.
2. **Transportation**: How can your design connect the site to the existing South Philadelphia neighborhoods. What physical connections are needed to facilitate pedestrian, cycling, transit, and auto access to the site for many workers?

3. **Service**: How your design addresses service by rail and truck and how it can be optimized by improvements to existing and new infrastructure without adverse impacts on the potential benefits to the neighborhoods.

4. **Public Space**: how your design can create opportunities for respite and play, even within a site that will be devoted to industrial uses in the near term, but also looking ahead to a time when the environmental problems with the site have been appropriately addressed.

5. **Effective Use of Land**: how your proposal addresses the very feasible immediate possibilities for the site, understanding the very likely uses that will come first, and those that could evolve over time, also creating good, sustainable environments for the many workers that could be employed in the new industries.

Your board **MAY** include:

- Any graphical elements necessary to convey your proposal, including drawings, photographs, charts, graphs, logos, renderings, etc.

- Text to help describe your proposal and graphical elements. All text on your board must be at least 3/16” (½ cm) in height (example: Arial font @ 18pt).

**Slide Show**

**Entrants MUST also electronically submit one (1) 9-slide PowerPoint (.PPT or .PPTX) presentation.** The purpose of this slide show is to help tell the story of your proposal and will also become the basis of your public presentation at the awards ceremony, should your team win.

- Slide shows must consist of exactly nine (9) slides in widescreen format (9:16) The first slide in the presentation should consist of:
  - The title of your project in large, bold letters in the center of the slide
  - Your Defining Image as the background, sized to fill the frame (it is okay to crop edges off your image to make it fill the frame). You may want to fade this image out slightly so that your project title is easier to read.
  - No additional text or images

- Content for the remaining eight (8) slides must be taken directly from your Presentation Board. Each slide should consist of:
**Requirements**

- One main image or graphic (a set of graphs or charts is fine, as long as they are each large enough to read or understand). All images used on slides should be medium-resolution (150 ppi), to keep the overall file size small.
- Optional: one sentence of text OR up to three short bullet points per slide (keep it brief!). Make sure all text on the slide is large enough to read when viewed in presentation mode without zooming in. Less text is better.

- Your slides should also include 20-seconds worth of talking points in the “Notes” section for each slide (these are visible to the presenter of the slide show, but not visible on the slide itself). These can be formatted as a couple of sentences or as bullet points but should help the judges understand what you are trying to explain with the slide. These notes will also form the basis of your public presentation, should you win.
- Take care to organize your slides into an order which best tells the story of your proposal and leads viewers through your concept in a logical order.

- Your slide show should **NOT** include any transition animations between slides, nor should it include any timing (jurors need to be able to flip back and forth through slides during the judging process).

**Anonymity**

*Your Presentation Board, Project Title, and Slide Show (including notes) MUST NOT include any personally identifying information*, such as:

- Team members’ names
- Teachers’ name(s)
- School name(s), city, or country
- School logo(s)

(Jurors must be able to review your entry anonymously – any information on your submission materials that allows jurors to identify you, your team members, your school, or your teachers will disqualify your entry.)
• Entries must be submitted online via: PhiladelphiaCFA.submittable.com

• Entries MUST be received (finished uploading) by 11:59pm EDT on Friday, November 20, 2020 (03:59 GMT, Saturday, November 21, 2020). Please begin submitting your entry well before the cutoff in case you run into any network or payment issues! You can submit at any time between August 1 and November 20, 2020.

• Entry fee ($25 per submission) must be paid online by credit card via the submission website at time of file upload.

• Project Boards must be submitted as .PDF files, optimized for “Web” viewing (smallest file size possible), with “Preserve Layers” turned OFF. There are online tools which can help you shrink down the size of your .PDF without diminishing the quality of your board.

• Project Board .PDFs and .PPT Slide Show files must be named using the following standard: YourProjectTitle.ext (no spaces between words - each word begins with a capital letter)
  • example: OurVisionForPhilly.pdf | OurVisionForPhilly.pptx

• You may add, remove, or change team members at any time up until you submit your entry. No need to alert us to any changes - simply include contact information for all your team members in the “Team Members” section of the online entry form when you submit your entry.
Judging

Submissions will be judged by guest jurors (to be announced) using the following criteria:

1. Adherence to the Requirements as described above

2. The overall ability of your team to create and communicate a cohesive vision for the project site that answers the following question: How might the refinery site be redeveloped in a way that provides the most benefit? Keep these thoughts in mind:
   • To remediate the site will be expensive and difficult, but the process is underway.
   • The best and most feasible programs are light industrial uses like manufacturing, logistics or distribution centers for major retailers, which nonetheless could create thousands of jobs.
   • The site’s proximity to, but disconnection from, the nearby neighborhoods. How can it be reconnected to the available workforce, without adding acres of parking?

3. The ability of your proposal to articulate and address the needs of the project stakeholders (the city, the community, the developers, potential funders, nearby public amenities and institutions, the city, tourists, etc.) via in the very near term and over time.

4. The quality of your visual information, especially your ability to cleanly and effectively communicate your ideas using images, graphics, and slides.

The jurors’ decision will be final.

Awards

Award winners will be publicly announced in late December 2020, once the judging process is complete. First prize is $5,000. Additional honorary (non-monetary) prizes may be awarded at the jurors’ discretion. All award-winning teams will be reimbursed up to $1,000 USD total towards travel and lodging costs to attend the awards ceremony, if there are team members are located outside the Greater Philadelphia region.

While the feasibility of a public gathering is not known, the awards ceremony in Philadelphia honoring the winners is tentatively planned to be held in February or March 2021 (exact date, time, and location will be announced when confirmed), and will also feature a talk by the 2020 Edmund N. Bacon Award winner, who will also be announced in late December 2020.

Winning entries may be physically and/or digitally exhibited at the awards ceremony. Entries may also be exhibited at the Center for Architecture and Design for an undetermined length of time in 2020 or beyond. Winning entries may additionally be displayed at other locations around Philadelphia or the world and will always be available for viewing on the Center for Architecture and Design’s website.
Attend
Presented annually in late Winter, the Edmund N. Bacon Award + Better Philadelphia Challenge programs are open to the public. Visit our website www.philadelphiacfa.org for ticket pricing and location.

Volunteer
Stimulate your creativity while connecting with a network of people who share your passion. You’ll instantly become an insider with information on new and exciting exhibitions, lectures, and events on the built environment. Complete our volunteer form at www.philadelphiacfa.org/volunteer.

Sponsor
Our annual competition and prestigious awards ceremony spotlight your organization on the international stage, attracting attention from outstanding students, urban practitioners, and national politicians while promoting visionary ideas for our city’s future. Contact Jermain Jenkins, jermaine@philadelphiacfa.org, for more information.

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 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.