



LEGACY HEADQUARTERS + RESOURCE CAMPUS

NOMA HOMECOMING | DETROIT 50

2021 BARBARA G. LAURIE NOMA STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION





View of the Detroit skyline from Belle Isle.

CHALLENGE

HISTORY

SITE

RULES

PRIZE

SCHEDULE

ADD'T INFO

DEADLINE

OCT 2

THE CHALLENGE

In 1971, twelve Black architects who attended the AIA National Convention in Detroit founded the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) to challenge the status quo of the industry. Since that day fifty years ago, NOMA continues to empower it's 1,400+ members in 78 professional and 75 student chapters across the country to foster justice and equity in communities of color through outreach, community advocacy, professional development, and design excellence.

With roots in Detroit, it is fitting that NOMA establish its "Legacy Headquarters + Resource Campus" here to serve the organization, its members, and the hometown community. Detroit is a place rich in history and ripe with opportunity; and as America's first appointed UNESCO City of Design, the creative culture welcomes well-designed space(s) that support the people and their environments. Detroit is home to the largest percentage of Black Americans of any U.S. city - most still living at or below the poverty line with many households having no access to clean natural resources. These conditions, combined with a prevalence of multi-generational households, single breadwinner families, and lack of access, make these communities inherently vulnerable.

From the Spanish Flu and tuberculosis to Civil Rights and American Disabilities Act, pandemics and movements have always changed the way we design, build, and live. A virus does not understand skin color. Furthermore, the clash at the intersection of Covid-19 and racism continues to be detrimental to racial and ethnic communities across the United States, especially to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) - making them more susceptible to the spread of COVID-19. We can no longer design for worlds past, but in new and sustainable ways that account for the health, safety, and welfare of the greater good.

The "Legacy Headquarters + Resource Campus" will not only serve as a valuable time capsule of Black culture's impact on the built environment, but also an invaluable asset addressing the challenges of the marginalized community it is positioned in. We call on architecture students to respond thoughtfully to the following design considerations:

- Honoring the history and culture of Black Detroiters
- Diverse housing mix with an emphasis on affordable, multi-generational housing
- Reimagined public spaces for socially distance and safe gatherings
- Sanitation, medication, and disease prevention
- Access to educational resources for all ages
- Social and recreational needs
- Ease of mobility
- Sustainable design practices
- Site adjacencies and context

DESIGN CRITERIA

The design team is tasked with creating a master plan for a complete community with the NOMA Legacy Headquarters as the anchor. A community is "complete" when it provides access to jobs, shopping, learning, open space, recreation, and other amenities and services. Projects will be judged on cultural expression, net positive integration, design excellence, community integration, project feasibility, and the verbal presentation.



Aerial view of the completed Brewster Douglass Housing Projects in 1955 (left)



The Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center in 1965 (right)

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HISTORY

In the 1930s, segregation played a major role in determining the racial composition of residential and commercial neighborhoods. Up until the mid-1950s, housing for Detroit's Black residents was limited due to legal practices that restricted where they could live. There was fierce political and public opposition to housing for Black Americans, especially from landlords and members of the real estate industry who feared the impact on the rental and sales market.

In 1935, as part of a national effort to alleviate the housing shortage and conditions experienced by low income residents, \$5.2 million was allocated under President Roosevelt's Public Works Administration for the construction of the Brewster Homes Development. The site of the new housing complex required the relocation of 718 families from the densely packed area which was identified by federal and local government officials as a "slum."

Eleanor Roosevelt presided over the groundbreaking ceremony as the Brewster Homes became one of the nation's first public housing developments built primarily for Black Americans. Once completed, the 22-acre Brewster Homes project had low-rise apartment buildings. At its peak, it was home to over 10,000 low-income residents.

The Brewster Homes were built around the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center, which was completed in 1929. With its social clubs and athletic programs, it was a haven for adults and children alike. Considering the Center's pivotal role, the location of the Brewster Homes was quite fortuitous.

Even after the construction of the Brewster Homes, the need for low-income and affordable housing in Detroit continued to grow. As the city rapidly industrialized, its population grew to staggering numbers.



The Supremes grew up in Brewster-Douglass projects. Pictured on the left are Florence Ballard, Mary Wilson, and Diana Ross. On the right, children play in the courtyards of the complex.



By estimates, about 350 black-owned businesses were located in the Black Bottom and Paradise Valley area. Above, Hastings Street (left) was decimated for I-75 (right).

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HISTORY (CONTINUED)

The "Detroit Plan" of 1946 outlined a strategy for more "slum" clearance and private redevelopment. It decimated well-established and thriving Black residential and commercial districts, such as Black Bottom. Former residents had little choice but to seek substandard and overcrowded housing in the few other areas they were permitted to live.

The Fredrick Douglass Apartment development, named after the Black abolitionist of the 18th century, was yet another response to public housing for Black Americans. In late 1941, land was acquired for the proposed project and by the following summer, plans and specifications were already complete. The 240-unit Douglass Apartments would eventually encompass 26 acres south and west of the Brewster Douglas Recreation Center.

Living in the Brewster-Douglass Projects meant being a part of a tight knit community. Residents described the Projects as a city within itself. It was home to several notable Black figures, but the desirability to live in the Brewster-Douglas Projects began to decline in the 1960s. The construction of Interstate-75 wiped out the culture on Hastings Street, which was the epicenter of Detroit's jazz scene. Families who could afford to move to single family homes moved out of the complex. Due to the lack of maintenance by the city, the Projects began to move into despair and crime rose.

To consolidate living space and reduce maintenance costs, partial demolition began as early as 1990. The original Brewster Homes were razed and replaced by 250 townhouses just north of the site. In 2003, two of the Frederick Douglas Apartments were imploded. By 2005, only 280 families occupied the remaining towers. With little community left to support it, the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center was closed in 2006. In 2008, the decision was made to shut down the towers complex entirely. They remained abandoned until their demolition in 2014.



Protesters (left) try to stop the demolition of the original Brewster Homes in 1990. The two six-story Douglass Apartment buildings (right) sit completely gutted with the newer Brewster Homes behind them.



The now-cleared site of the Brewster-Douglass housing projects lies just beyond the basketball courts of the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center.

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Best known as the Motor City, the "Big Three" auto manufacturers Chrysler, Ford, and General Motors are headquartered in the Detroit metropolitan area. The rapid growth of the auto industry in the early 20th century attracted hundreds of thousands of new workers. The Great Migration brought rural Black Americans from the South. At its peak in 1950, Detroit was home to 1.8 million people. Today, the estimated population is 670,000 with almost 83% of the racial composition as Black. Detroit residents are internationally known to take matters of improving their cityscape into their own hands. Such projects include volunteer renovation and revitalization groups and various urban gardening movements.

The project site is a large vacant block which still bears the faint footprints of the demolished 14-story Frederick Douglass high rise apartments. The surrounding neighborhood is varied in character, size, scale, and age of building stock. To the north of the site is the former Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center. Just south of the vacant lot is the Fisher Freeway. To the east of the site is Interstate-75. A buffer is provided by the Chrysler Service Drive and a grass covered berm which slopes down several dozen feet to the paved surface of the sunken freeway. To the west of the building are vacant lots where the original Brewster Homes stood and Brush Street further west with its moderately dense mixture of residential and commercial structures.

Note: Online street views may still show the Frederick Douglass towers.





Grffiti in Highland Park (left) at the height of the pandemic in April 2020. Detroit Will Breathe protesters (right) protesting the murder of Black people at the hands of police.

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PROGRAM

NOMA Legacy Headquarters (12,000 sf – 30,000 sf)

Reception: 300-500 sf
 Exhibition/Multi-Purpose Space: 4,000 sf
 Project Pipeline Classrooms: 1,000 sf per classroom (minimum four classrooms)
 National Headquarters Office: 300 sf
 NOMA Detroit Office: 225-300 sf
 Other Offices: 120-225 sf (minimum three)
 Work Stations: 48-100 sf
 Board Room: 460 sf
 Conference Rooms: 300 sf
 Small Meeting Rooms: 225 sf
 Copy Room: 150 sf
 Files/Library: 375 sf
 Break Room: 300 sf

Note: Provided programs and square footages are recommendations.

Housing

Approximately 240 units
 10% Studio at 600 sf
 40% One Bedroom at 800 sf
 40% Two Bedrooms at 1,150 sf
 10% Townhouses at 2,200 sf

Public Space

Indoor: 30,000 sf
 Outdoor: 30,000 sf

Commercial

45,000 sf

Retail

45,000

Education & Occupation

60,000 sf

Health & Wellness

30,000 sf

Zoning Information

SD2—SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, MIXED-USE

This district is designed to encourage a complementary mixture of more intensive pedestrian- and transit-oriented uses that may be compatible with a neighborhood center or with a location along major or secondary thoroughfares. Parking requirements are reduced in certain circumstances to promote use of transit and non-motorized transportation; shared parking and a district approach to parking are encouraged to lessen demand for off-street parking spaces. Certain establishments that serve alcohol for consumption on the premises are permitted without a spacing requirement in order to attract increased pedestrian traffic to the area.

Maximum height. Maximum height shall be 45 feet for non-mixed-use. Mixed-use building must not exceed 60 feet and 5 stories in height.

Front setbacks. A minimum front setback is not required. The maximum front setback allowed is 20 feet.

Rear setbacks. If no alley is present, single-story buildings shall have a minimum rear setback of 10 feet. Multi-story buildings shall have a rear setback of 10 feet if an alley is to the rear of the building and 20 feet if one is not present.

Side setbacks. No minimum side setback is required.

Off-street parking locations. Parking shall be prohibited between the street and front façade of buildings.

ADA Guidelines for Programming

For more information, visit www.ada.gov.

Sustainable Design Practices

For information on green building standards, visit www.usgbc.org and www.epa.gov.



Roadwork art (left) by Bryce Detroit in the Northend neighborhood.



The Heidelberg Project (right) on Detroit's east side by artist Tyree Guyton.

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RULES

1. All team members must be financial (paid) members of both the local NOMAS chapter (if applicable) AND the national organization for the calendar year 2021, by January 31, 2021. Note that this is the deadline for NOMA National membership dues. Exception: Students who are in their first semester/quarter of architectural study in Fall 2021. If you have questions about membership dues, contact your region liaison.
2. Chapter reports for existing chapters and notification of intent to participate must be received by the University Liaisons via e-mail by May 1, 2021.
3. New chapters must be approved and recognized by the national board by September 1, 2021.
4. NOMAS chapter must be a recognized student organization on its respective campus with access to a university-hosted bank account to receive funds. If selected as a winning team, the chapter is required to provide an IRS Form W-9 before the disbursement of prize money.
5. All students are required to attend the NOMAS Chapter Orientation during the conference. Time and location to be announced with the release of the conference schedule. If you are unable to attend, you must notify your University Liaison.
6. All project teams must have a minimum of two (2) undergraduate students. If you are unable to meet this requirement, contact your regional university liaison.
7. There is no entry or submission fee to participate in the competition.
8. Only one entry per NOMAS chapter and/or school will be accepted.
9. Each student must be a registered conference attendee.
10. Team members and faculty advisors are prohibited from soliciting comments directly from jurors at any time. Teams that approach jurors will be disqualified.



Every Sunday following Mother's Day is Flower Day at Detroit's historic Eastern Market (left). The Detroit Industry Mural (right) depicts the Ford Motor Company in the 1930s.



Motown Museum (left) is the original Motown Records studio. The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History (right) holds the world's largest permanent exhibit on African-American culture.

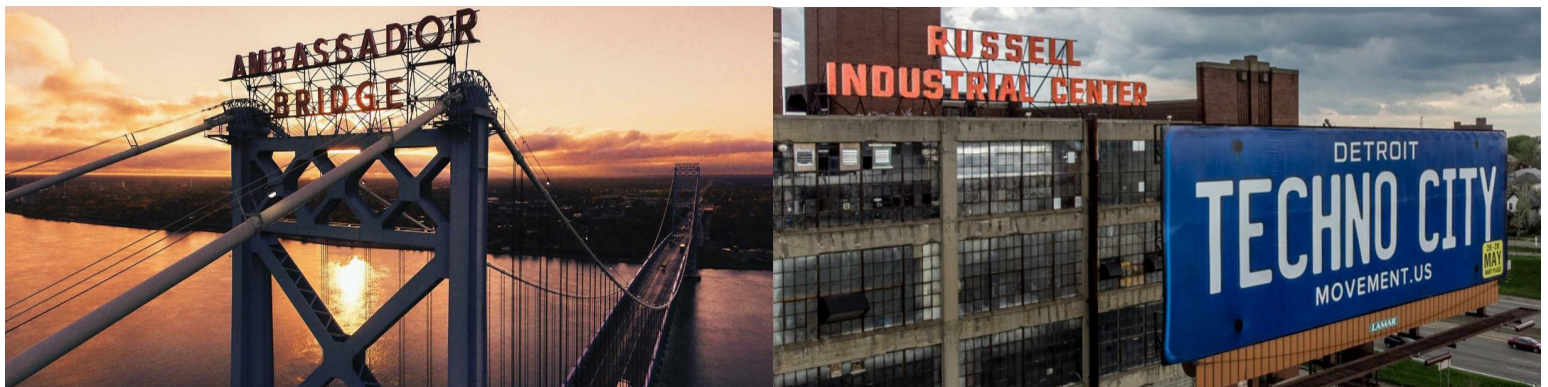
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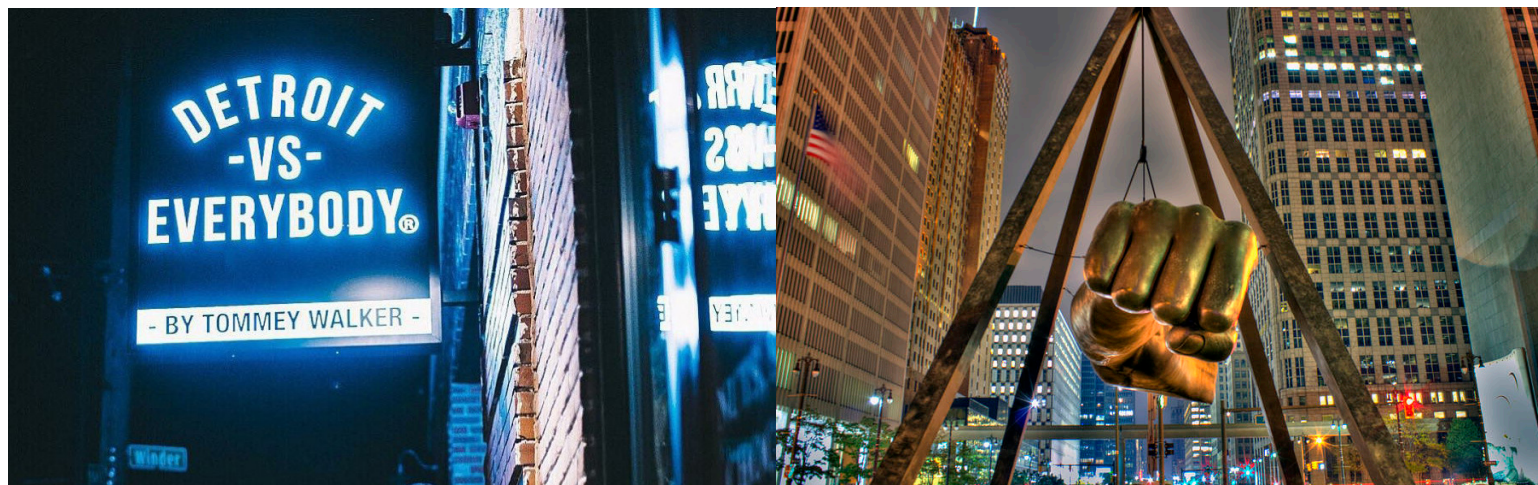
OCT 2

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Round 1 (Submitted online at www.submit.noma.net)
 - a. Maximum of two (2) landscape orientation 16:9 ratio digital presentation slides for round 1, uploaded in PDFs and JPEG format. PDF slides will be presented digitally on a single projector or TV monitor. Each presentation may include concept diagrams, plans, sections, elevations, and 3D views to convey your design concepts. Incorrect board sizes or orientations will be disqualified. Physically mounted boards will not be accepted. Submitted files will be automatically used for round 1 presentations; modified presentations will not be accepted during the week of conference. JPEG files will be used for the cocktail hour presentation.
 - b. One (1) pre-recorded 5:00 minute audio/visual presentation in .mp4 format. Video may contain narration, fly-throughs, animation, renderings, drawings, or any other creative elements to illustrate their project. The video may be re-used during the Round 2 presentation if selected by the jurors.
 - c. Contact information sheet for each team member, including e-mail and telephone number in .doc or .xls format. Teams members who are presenting during live presentations should be identified.
 - d. Optional: Teams are allowed to bring up to one (1) physical model, maximum size 24"W x 36"L. Scale to be determined by the competition team.
2. Round 1 submission must be uploaded through the online submission portal, made available one week prior to the deadline. All files must be labeled in the following format:
Region_School Name_2021_<File Description> (for example, Northeast_Howard_2021_Presentation)
3. Round 2 (Finalists only)
 - a. If selected for Round 2, each team may present an additional digital presentation with no limitations within the allotted time frame. This optional presentation should not be included with the initial round 1 submission. Students are responsible for bringing the presentation on a flash drive or cloud storage device prior to the start of Round 2 (to be coordinated with the University Liaisons)
4. No school names may be on any slide, 3D view, or the model.
5. Submissions that do not comply with the file naming system will NOT be accepted.
6. Not following the brief competition rules will result in penalties given at the discretion of the University Liaisons.



The Ambassador Bridge (left) connects Detroit to Windsor, Canada across the Detroit River. Techno was pioneered in Detroit in the 80s (right).



Detroit vs. Everybody (left) flagship store in Eastern Market. The Fist (right) is a memorial in Hart Plaza dedicated to Joe Lewis who practiced boxing at the Brewster-Wheeler Recreation Center.

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| | |
|------------|---------|
| 1st Place: | \$2,000 |
| 2nd Place: | \$1,500 |
| 3rd Place: | \$1000 |

SCHEDULE

1. The student design competition will be conducted over two days. Final schedule to be announced with the release of the conference schedule. Students should be available for both days.
2. May 1, 2021: Submission of 2020 Chapter Report and notification of your entry to your Regional University Liaison
3. August 27, 2021: Deadline for questions related to the competition rules, program requirements, or schedule
 - a. All questions related to site history, culture, and resident specific questions should be directed to the regional University Liaison.
4. Deadline to upload Round 1 Submission: October 2, 2021 @ 11:59 pm PT. Entries submitted after the deadline will not be eligible to compete.

JUDGING

Round 1

Teams will be divided into two random groups. Each team will have 5 minutes to briefly introduce their project. During that time, the jurors will be listening **ONLY** and taking notes. There will be no Q&A for this round.

Deliberation

Jurors will deliberate and select a maximum of 3 teams from each group for a total of 6 that will move to round two.

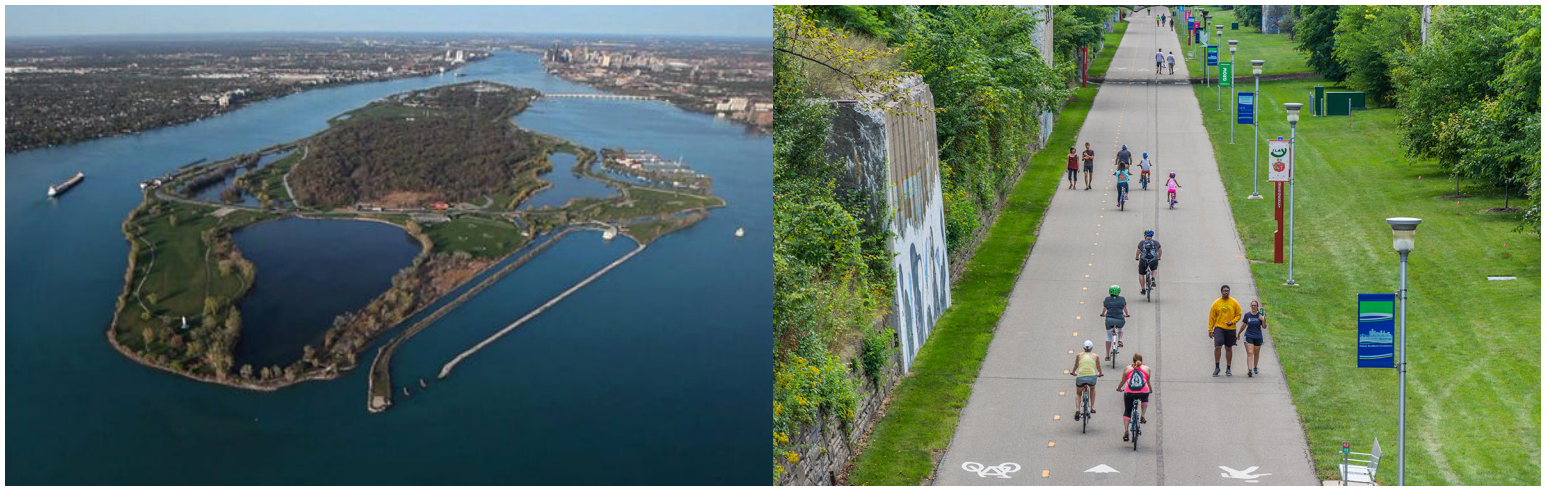
Announcement of Top 6

Top 6 teams will be announced at the conclusion of deliberation. If your project was not selected to move onto Round 2, your University Liaison would distribute comments from the jurors after the conference. Out of respect and time consideration, please do not ask for feedback from the judges.

Round 2

Each team will present for approximately 20 mins (10 min presentation followed by 10 min Q&A). Once all teams have presented, the jurors will spend the remaining time deliberating and select the final competition winners.

Final competition winners will be announced at the Awards Banquet.



Belle Isle (left) is an island park in the Detroit River with an aquarium, conservatory, nature center, museum, and an yacht club. The Dequindre Cut (right) is a below grade, nonmotorized pathway with murals along the way.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

It is recommended that this design competition be integrated into a formal design studio or an independent study in order to maximize participation across multiple disciplines. Each team member may earn up to 320 hours for completion and submission of a design competition entry outside of a recognized work setting or academic requirement. Please see www.ncarb.org for information and specifications.

Upon receipt, all entries become the property of NOMA. NOMA reserves the right to publish drawings, written descriptions, photographs, and the names of entrants, without issuing compensation. Chapter report must be submitted with your "notification to compete".

You must have an active NOMA Chapter to Compete.

The NOMAS Student Orientation is mandatory. Please contact your liaison if you have any issues with attendance.

CONTACT

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Barbara G. Laurie, AIA, NOMA
Dec 5, 1961 - Feb 7, 2013

In 2013, the annual NOMA Student Design Competition was renamed in honor of Barbara G. Laurie, AIA, a lifelong friend, supporter, professor, mentor, and an active member within the NOMA family. An accomplished architect in her own right, Barbara dedicated her life to the education and mentorship of young students as a professor of architecture at Howard University. Drawing inspiration from her students, both in practice and at school, she consistently encouraged and pushed her students to realize their full potential.

