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Best in urban planning honored at AIA Regional & Urban Design Award 2025

By [Niall Patrick Walsh](#) | Jun 12, '25 10:00 AM EST



Mary Ellen McCormack Master Plan by CBT and The Architectural Team. Image credit: Uviz

The [American Institute of Architects](#) has announced the winners of its 2025 Regional & Urban Design Award. Five schemes were honored in this year's edition of the award, which are “recognized as the best in urban design, regional and city planning, and community development.”

The awards come days after the AIA also honored the [best in contemporary architecture](#) at the 2025 AIA Architecture Awards and the [best in small-scale architecture](#) at the AIA Small Project Award. This week has also seen the [best housing design](#) honored at the AIA Housing Award and the best in sustainable architecture honored at the AIA COTE Top Ten Award. You can compare the projects recognized this year to those of previous years by following our ongoing coverage of the series [here](#).

In the meantime, the winners of the Regional & Urban Design Award 2025 are as follows:

Avon Lake Renewable Master Plan, Avon Lake, OH

[Gensler](#)



Avon Lake Renewable Master Plan by Gensler. Image credit: Shimmer Art Studio

[Excerpt:](#) The Avon Lake Regenerative Master Plan transforms a decommissioned coal-fired power plant into a vibrant, mixed-use lakefront destination on Lake Erie. Addressing the plant's 2022 closure, which improved environmental conditions but caused job losses and reduced city revenue, the plan adaptively reuses historic structures including elements of the turbine hall and stacks. It also reconnects Avon Lake to the waterfront by adding housing, offices, and public attractions while sustainably restoring the site. This project revitalizes the community and serves as a model for transforming obsolete industrial sites into regional destinations with renewed purpose.

Mary Ellen McCormack Master Plan: Phase One, Boston, MA

[CBT](#) and [The Architectural Team](#)



Mary Ellen McCormack Master Plan by CBT and The Architectural Team. Image credit: Uviz

Excerpt: The Mary Ellen McCormack master plan will transform the oldest public housing development in New England into a modern, diverse, and thriving neighborhood where residents are the highest priority – not just through modern homes & open spaces, but through programs designed to create a better quality of life and the chance to pursue brighter futures. Originally built in the 1930s, the existing South Boston complex is severely lacking in community space and modern amenities. A collaboration between the Boston Housing Authority, WinnCompanies, and the Mary Ellen McCormack community, Phase One will reimagine the site as a true mixed-income, inclusive community.

Master Plan and Recreation Center at the Reservoir District, Washington, DC

[Perkins Eastman DC](#) and [Quinn Evans](#)



Master Plan and Recreation Center at the Reservoir District by Perkins Eastman DC and Quinn Evans. Image credit: Andrew Rugge

Excerpt: The Reservoir District Master Plan reimagines a historic industrial site, originally built to provide clean drinking water to the Nation's Capital, into a vibrant, mixed-use development. The first phase celebrates the site's historic layout and architectural character with a six-acre park and recreation center. The master plan preserves the site's unique historic elements while creating a cohesive neighborhood through the integration of new parks and plazas, retail, market-rate and affordable housing, and new medical office/research facilities. The development and design program complement the surrounding residential neighborhoods and supports existing adjacent uses, such as health care facilities.

Student Success District, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

[The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP](#) in collaboration with **Poster Mirto McDonald**



Student Success District, University of Arizona by The Miller Hull Partnership, LLP in collaboration with Poster Mirto McDonald. Image credit: Lara Swimmer

Excerpt: The Student Success District at the University of Arizona strengthens connections between new and existing structures, activates underutilized spaces both indoors and out, and prioritizes the student experience. This complex project redefines and revitalizes the Main Library and the Bear Down Gymnasium, reorients the entry to the Weaver Science-Engineering Library, and merges them with the new 55,000 SF Bartlett Center for Academic Success. Envisioned as a unified and universally accessible space that broadens the definition of student support, the District brings together the university's commitment to academic and research excellence, student support, and holistic health and wellness.

Tom Lee Park, Memphis, TN

Studio Gang and SCAPE



Tom Lee Park by Studio Gang and SCAPE. Image credit: Connor Ryan

[Excerpt](#): Tom Lee Park catalyzes the reunification of river and city by transforming a significant piece of the riverfront into a signature park where community life can flourish. The design is informed by the Mississippi's dynamic patterns of flow. Architecture and landscape work together to smoothly facilitate the movement of people into and through the park and capture the sense of motion and change that the river exemplifies. The park's program incorporates the input of Memphians from across the city. Designed to support their ambitions and favorite activities, new structures emerge from the landscape to flexibly accommodate a range of uses.