

A  
STUDENT  
DESIGN  
COMPETITION

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2023

# A New Frontier

The Contemporary  
Border Crossing



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CAAJ/AAJC

CANADIAN ACADEMY OF ARCHITECTURE FOR JUSTICE  
ACADÉMIE D'ARCHITECTURE DE JUSTICE CANADIENNE

Royal Architectural  
Institute of Canada  
Foundation

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## A New Frontier: The Contemporary Border Crossing

Border crossing involves a change of state; the crossing of a barrier between two nations. The nature and meaning of this barrier are very specific to its location and the different characters of the nations involved. Borders can mark dramatic transitions between different cultures, political systems, economies, and levels of freedom. They range from open and undefended to closed and heavily militarized.

In many places around the world, borders are under stress and evolving to respond to war, migration pressures, the ebb and flow of political alliances, the creation and removal of trade barriers, the threat of terrorism, the movement of illegal drugs and weapons, and the spread of disease.

Border crossing architecture is the physical manifestation of the balance between evolving security concerns and the desire to welcome visitors and newcomers while symbolically marking the entry into a new country.

The Canadian Academy of Architecture for Justice (CAAJ) invites architecture students to speculate on these issues in a design competition for a new border crossing. Submissions are welcomed from either studio groups or individuals. The design will be evaluated by a jury of experts, architects and industry professionals. Participants are highly encouraged to explore a wide spectrum of architectural responses from functional and practical at one end to philosophical and social at the other, including ways in which this building or complex could be integrated into the surrounding context and community, act as a catalyst for building a positive relationship between two nations, and address what a border entry means in today's context.

## The Canadian Academy of Architecture for Justice

The Canadian Academy of Architecture for Justice (CAAJ) is a group of architects, designers and allied professionals working in the field of justice architecture, with the aim of sharing knowledge, advancing Canadian expertise in the field, and advocating for a justice system that is accessible and equitable for all members of society. The Academy focuses on the four areas of justice architecture – courts, corrections, law enforcement, and allied facilities.

## Submission Requirements & Evaluation

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### **Registration & Eligibility**

Participants must register for the competition on the CAAJ website ([www.caaj.ca](http://www.caaj.ca)).

Each participant must be enrolled as a student at a recognized school of architecture. Winners will be required to provide proof of enrollment.

Individual competitors or teams are welcome to participate.

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<b>Timelines</b>	Competition package released.....January 31, 2023
	Competition entry submission due.....June 30, 2023
	Results announced.....August 31, 2023

**Submission Requirements**

- Location plan
- Site plan
- Floor plans
- Elevations
- Key sections
- Planning diagrams and explanatory illustrations, including 3D images
- Maximum 500-word narrative

All submissions must be in PDF format, on a maximum of two A1-size panels, in a horizontal (landscape) format.

Submissions must be uploaded to the CAAJ website ([www.caaj.ca](http://www.caaj.ca)) by 11:59pm ET on the date specified above. The maximum combined file size for the submission is 10MB.

**Jury**



**Brent Bellamy** | Architect & Creative Director, Number TEN Architectural Group  
Columnist, Winnipeg Free Press

Brent Bellamy is an Architect and Creative Director at Number TEN Architectural Group in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Brent publicly advocates for constructive dialogue on complex contemporary issues affecting architecture, design, city-building, and urban policy by demonstrating a thoughtful approach to conventional and social media that brings these issues into the common discourse. Brent has been a board member of the Council for Canadian Urbanism, a juror for Smart Cities Challenge Canada and is Chair of CentreVenture, Winnipeg’s downtown development agency. In 2019, Brent was presented with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada’s Advocate for Architecture Award, recognizing his community leadership and advocacy through teaching, professional mentorships, public speaking, and writing that includes a regular column in the Winnipeg Free Press.



**David Clusiau** | Vice President of Design, NORR Architects & Engineers | CAAJ Chair

As Vice President of Architectural Design at NORR, David provides strategic direction and leads design teams for large international projects and small-scale assignments, working collaboratively with clients and partners to find an inspired and appropriate vision, including award-winning designs for a number of border crossings. David is a regular contributor to AIA Academy of Architecture for Justice Conferences and is the founding Chair of the CAAJ. David has served on juries for the RAIC, AIA AAJ and the CAAJ, and is the Chair of the City of Hamilton Design Review Panel.



**Julie Snow** | Founding Principal, Snow Kreilich Architects

Julie Snow leads a studio-based practice in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The studio's interest in pragmatic and critical programmatic reflection results in innovative designs that expand our understanding of architectural performance. Design strategies engage issues of how architecture performs within each project's social, cultural and economic context. The practice has been recognized with numerous awards, including awards for a number of border crossings as well as the AIA's 2018 Architecture Firm Award, an honor that recognizes a practice that consistently has produced distinguished architecture for at least 10 years. Julie Snow has held several visiting professor positions, as well as teaching at the University of Minnesota College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture where she received the Ralph Rapson Award for Distinguished Teaching. In 2011 she was awarded the Architecture Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.


**Ron Rienas | General Manager, Buffalo & Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority**

Ron Rienas is the General Manager of the binational Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority which owns and operates the Peace Bridge between Buffalo, New York and Fort Erie, Ontario, the second-largest border crossing between the US and Canada. He oversees operations of the Finance, Human Resources, Operations, and Toll/Traffic Departments. Prior to holding this position, he was the Facilities Manager of the Peace Bridge Authority beginning in 2000. He previously spent 12 years as the Director of Planning & Property Safety with the Town of Fort Erie where he oversaw the planning and building departments. Prior to his tenure with the Town of Fort Erie, Ron was employed with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Ontario, and with an urban and rural planning consultant firm in the Niagara Region. He holds an honors bachelor's degree in urban and regional planning with an environmental studies major and management studies minor.


**Sontaya Bluangtook | Senior Associate, UNStudio**

Sontaya Bluangtook is a Senior Architect and Associate at UNStudio's Amsterdam office. She joined UNS in 2012 after practicing at various international architecture offices in Los Angeles and Atlanta. Sontaya is the design lead for multiple global projects of varying typology and scale. She has contributed to a broad range of projects from urban transit hubs to customized interiors to product design. Most recently, she has been integral to the interior design and façade renovation for the Hanwha Headquarters tower in Seoul, South Korea. Her approach to design begins with the humanistic variable and centers on enhancing the user experience.


**Stephanie Fleming | Architect, NORR Architects & Engineers  
CAAJ Competition Co-Chair & Secretary**

Stephanie Fleming is an architect and project manager with NORR. She has both design and technical experience on a wide variety of projects in the commercial, transportation, public buildings, government, and justice sectors. With a focus on justice architecture, she has contributed to many courts, corrections and border crossing projects. She is heavily involved in the CAAJ executive committee and earned an emerging professional scholarship at the AIA Academy of Architecture for Justice conference in 2019.

**Awards**

First prize is \$3,000 CAD, second and third prizes are \$1,000 CAD each. Prize awards are generously provided by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) Foundation and will be issued to winners via electronic bank transfer.

Winning entries will be featured on the CAAJ website and individuals/team members will be provided with electronic certificates.

**Publication**

The Canadian Academy of Architecture for Justice reserves the right to publish entries on the CAAJ website, or to distribute to other architecture or justice-related publication media (websites, magazines or exhibitions). Credit for authorship will remain with the individual (or named individuals in the case of a team submission). By submitting material individual competitors and teams acknowledge this right.

## Objectives

Through their design submission competitors are asked to:

- Address the idea of what a border means in their chosen context and express this meaning through the architecture
- Achieve a balance (or imbalance) between security and welcoming that is appropriate for the chosen context
- Establish a connection with the site context; for example, by symbolizing the character of the place that is entered, acknowledging or commemorating the site's history, addressing issues facing the community, or contributing to the public realm
- Incorporate features into the physical environment that promote calm and stress relief

## Design Brief

- The following space allocations below have been provided as a **guide**, not as requirements.
- Competitors may select one or more of the following functions to accommodate in their design, or propose alternate functions. Functions should be selected based on the site context.
- The program components for each function can be housed in separate buildings, or multiple functions can be combined into one or more buildings.
- Each function should have an associated administrative area including offices, workstations, meeting rooms, and staff amenities.
- An entry plaza should be provided on the site, the size and nature of which will depend on the volume and types of traffic.
- Competitors are encouraged to add additional, complementary program components to support the objectives described above. Some examples are provided below but are not requirements.

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### Commercial Vehicle Processing

Inspection and processing of vehicles such as trucks, cargo vans, or livestock transport vehicles crossing the border for commercial purposes

Examples of program elements:

- **Primary** – public access, used by all crossing the border
    - Primary inspection lanes and booths with sheltering canopy for inbound traffic
    - Exit lane for outbound traffic
  - **Secondary** – controlled public access, for additional investigation as directed by border crossing staff
    - Outdoor examination area
    - Indoor examination area with loading docks
    - Storage for seized goods
    - Livestock processing and inspection area, laboratory, and office area
    - Drivers' waiting area/lounge/café and washrooms
    - Interview rooms
    - Search and holding rooms
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**Private Vehicle Processing**

Inspection and processing of vehicles such as cars, buses, and recreational vehicles crossing the border for private or non-commercial purposes

Examples of program elements:

- **Primary** – public access, used by all crossing the border
    - Primary inspection lanes and booths with sheltering canopy for inbound traffic
    - Exit lane for outbound traffic
  - **Secondary** – controlled public access, for additional investigation as directed by border crossing staff
    - Covered outdoor examination area
    - Enclosed examination garage
    - Public entrance lobby with waiting area, counters, information kiosks, and washrooms
    - Interview rooms
    - Search and holding rooms
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**Pedestrian Processing**

Inspection and processing of pedestrians and/or refugees crossing the border without a vehicle

Examples of program elements:

- **Primary** – public access, used by all crossing the border
    - Public entrance lobby with waiting area, counters, information kiosks, and washrooms
    - Supervised children's area
  - **Secondary** – controlled public access, for additional investigation as directed by border crossing staff
    - Interview rooms
    - Search and holding rooms
    - Medical examination facilities
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**Complementary Program Components**

Supplementary program to produce revenue or contribute to the community

Examples of program elements:

- Duty free shop
  - Money exchange
  - Toll booths at bridge/road, if applicable
  - Offices for private brokers
  - Museum commemorating site history
  - Community program space
  - Artwork
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